This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

116
LENOX LIBRARY

Bancroft Collection.
Purchased in 1893.

ORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
ERENCE DEPARTMENT

is under no circumstances
aken from the Building

APR 13 1918

(Coleridge)
NAD

BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR,

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF MY

LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS.

BY S. T. COLERIDGE.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY LEAVITT, LORD & Co.
BOSTON:
CROCKER & BREWSTER.
1834.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

R. Northway, Jr. Printer, Utica.

BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF MY

LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS.

. So wenig er auch bestimmt seyn mag andere zu belehren, sa wunscht er dock sich denen mitzutheilen, die er sick gleichgesinnt weiss odor hofft, deren Anzahl aber in der Breite der Welt zerstreut ist: er wunscht sein Verhaltniss zu den altesten Freunden wieder anzuknupfen, mit neuen es fortzusetzen, und in der letzen generation sich wieder andere fur sein ubrige Leibenszeit zu geivinnen Er wunscht der Jugend die Umwege zu ersparen, auf denen er sich selbst verirrte. GOETHE.

TRANSLATION.—Little call as he may have to instruct others, he wishes nevertheless to open out his heart to such as he either knows or hopes to be of like mind with himself, but who are widely scattered in the world: he wishes to knit anew his connections with his oldest friends, to continue those recently formed, and to win other friends among the rising generation for the remaining course of his life. He wishes to spare the young those circuitous paths, on which he himself had lost his way.

BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.

CHAPTER I.

The motives of the present work—Reception of the Author's first publication—The discipline of his taste at school—The effect of contemporary writers on youthful minds—Bowles's sonnets—Comparison between the Poets before and since Mr. Pope.

It has been my lot to have had my name introduced, both in conversation and in print, more frequently than I find it easy to explain, whether I consider the fewness, unimportance, and limited circulation of my writings, or the retirement and distance in which I have lived, both from the literary and political world. Most often it has been connected with some charge which I could not acknowledge, or some principle which I had never entertained. Nevertheless, had I had no other motive, or incitement, the reader would not have been troubled with this exculpation. What my additional purposes were, will be seen in the following pages. It will be found, that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally. I have used the narration chiefly for the purpose of giving a continuity to the work, in part for the sake of the miscellaneous reflections suggested to me by particular events, but still more as introductory to the statement of my principles in politics, religion, and philosophy, and the application of the rules, deduced from philosophical principles, to poetry and criticism. But of the objects which I proposed to myself, it was not the least important to effect, as far as possible, a settlement of the long continued controversy concerning the true nature of poetic diction: and, at the same time, to define with the utmost impartiality, the real *poetic* character of the poet, by whose writings this controversy was first kindled, and has been since fuelled and fanned.

In 1794, when I had barely passed the verge of manhood, I published a small volume of juvenile poems. They were received with a degree of favor which, young as I was, I well knew was

bestowed on them not so much for any positive merit, as because they were considered buds of hope, and promises of better works to come. The critics of that day, the most flattering, equally with the severest, concurred in objecting to them, obscurity, a general turgidness of diction, and a profusion of new-coined double epithets.* The first is the fault which a writer is the least able to detect in his own compositions; and my mind was not then sufficiently disciplined to receive the authority of others, as a substitute for my own conviction. Satisfied that the thoughts, such as they were, could not have been expressed otherwise, or at least more perspicuously, I forgot to inquire, whether the thoughts themselves did not demand a degree of attention unsuitable to the nature and objects of poetry. This remark, however, applies chiefly, though not exclusively, to the *Religious Musings*. The remainder of the charge I admitted to its full extent, and not without sincere acknowledgments to both my private and public censors for their friendly admonitions. In the after editions, I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter, both of thought and diction; though, in truth, these parasite plants of youthful poetry had insinuated themselves into my longer poems with such intricacy of union, that I was obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower. From that period to the date of the present work, I have published nothing, with my name, which could, by any possibility, have come before the board of anonymous criticism. Even the three or four poems, printed with the works of a friend, as far as they were consured at all, were charged with the same or similar defects, though,

* The authority of Milton and Shakspeare may be usefully pointed out to young authors. In the Comus, and earlier poems of Milton, there is a superfluity of double epithets; while in the Paradise Lost we find very few, and in the Paradise Regained, scarce any. The same remark holds almost equally true of the Love's Labor Lost, Romeo and Juliet, Venus and Adonis, and Lucrece, compared with the Lear, Macbeth, Othello, and Hamlet of our great dramatist. The rule for the admission of double epithets seems to be this: either that they should be already denizens of our language, such as blood-stained, terror-stricken, self-applauding; or when a new epithet, or one found in books only, is hazarded, that it, at least, be one word, not two words made one by mere virtue of the printer's hyphen. A language which, like the English, is almost without cases, is indeed in its very genius unfitted for compounds. If a writer, every time a compounded word suggests itself to him, would seek for some other mode of expressing the same sense, the chances are always greatly in favor of his finding a better word. "Tanquam scopulum sic vites insolens verbum," is the wise advice of Cæsar to the Roman orators, and the precept applies with double force to the writers in our own language. But it must not be forgotten, that the same Cæsar wrote a grammatical treatise for the purpose of reforming the ordinary language, by bringing it to a greater accordance with the principles of logic or universal grammar.

I am persuaded, not with equal justice: with an EXCESS OF ORNAMENT, in addition to STRAINED AND ELABORATE DICTION. (*Vide the criticism on the* "ANCIENT MARINER," *in the Monthly and Critical Reviewers of the first volume of the Lyrical Ballads.*) May I be permitted to add, that, even at the early period of my juvenile poems, I saw and admitted the superiority of an austerer, and more natural style, with an insight not less clear than I at present possess. My judgment was stronger than were my powers of realizing its dictates; and the faults of my language, though indeed partly owing to a wrong choice of subjects, and the desire of giving a poetic coloring to abstract and metaphysical truths, in which a new world then seemed to open upon me, did yet, in part likewise, originate in unfeigned diffidence of my own comparative talent. During several years of my youth and early manhood, I reverenced those who had re-introduced the manly simplicity of the Grecian, and of our own elder poets, with such enthusiasm, as made the hope seem presumptuous of writing successfully in the same style. Perhaps a similar process has happened to others; but my earliest poems were marked by an ease and simplicity which I have studied, perhaps with inferior success, to impress on my later compositions.

At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master. He * early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius, (in such extracts as I then read,) Terence, and, above all, the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the, so called, silver and brazen ages, but with even those of the Augustan era; and on grounds of plain sense and universal logic, to see and assert the superiority of the former, in the truth and nativeness, both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek tragic poets, he made us read Shakspeare and Milton as lessons: and they were lessons, too, which required most time and trouble to *bring up*, so as to escape his censure. I learnt from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more

* The Rev. James Bowyer, many years Head Master of the Grammar school, Christ Hospital.

fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember, that, availing himself of the synonymes to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, *why* it would not have answered the same purpose; and *wherein* consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

In our own English compositions, (at least for the last three years of our school education,) he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. Lute, harp, and lyre; muse, muses, and inspirations; Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hipocrene, were all an abomination to him. In fancy, I can almost hear him now, exclaiming, "*Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your Nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh, aye! the cloister-pump, I suppose!*" Nay, certain introductions, similes, and examples, were placed by name on a list of interdiction. Among the similes, there was, I remember, that of the Manchineel fruit, as suiting equally well with too many subjects; in which, however, it yielded the palm at once to the example of Alexander and Clytus, which was equally good and apt, whatever might be the theme. Was it Ambition? Alexander and Clytus! Flattery? Alexander and Clytus! Anger? Drunkenness? Pride? Friendship? Ingratitude? Late repentance? Still, still Alexander and Clytus! At length, the praises of agriculture having been exemplified in the sagacious observation, that, had Alexander been holding the plough, he would not have run his friend Clytus through with a spear, this tried and serviceable old friend was banished by public edict in secula seculorum. I have sometimes ventured to think, that a list of this kind, or an index expurgatorious of certain well-known and ever-returning phrases, both introductory and transitional, including the large assortment of modest egotisms, and flattering illeisms, &c. &c. might be hung up in our law-courts, and both houses of parliament, with great advantage to the public, as an important saving of national time, an incalculable relief to his Majesty's ministers, but, above all, as ensuring the thanks of the country attorneys and their clients, who have private bills to carry through the house.

Be this as it may, there was one custom of our master which I cannot pass over in silence, because I think it imitable and worthy of imitation. He would often permit our theme exercises, under some pretext of want of time, to accumulate, till each lad had four or five to be looked over. Then placing the whole number *abreast* on his desk, he would ask the writer, why this or that sentence might not have found as appropriate a place under this or that thesis: and if no satisfying answer could be returned, and two faults of the same kind were found in one exercise, the irrevocable verdict followed; the exercise was torn up, and another on the same subject to be produced, in addition to the tasks of the day. The reader will, I trust, excuse this tribute of recollection to a man, whose severities, even now, not seldom furnish the dreams, by which the blind fancy would fain interpret to the mind the painful sensations of distempered sleep, but neither lessen nor dim the deep sense of my moral and intellectual obligations. He sent us to the University excellent Latin and Greek scholars, and tolerable Hebraists. Yet our classical knowledge was the least of the good gifts which we derived from his zealous and conscientious tutorage. He is now gone to his final reward, full of years, and full of honors, even of those honors which were dearest to his heart, as gratefully bestowed by that school, and still binding him to the interests of that school, in which he had been himself educated, and to which, during his whole life, he was a dedicated thing.

From causes, which this is not the place to investigate, no models of past times, however perfect, can have the same vivid effect on the youthful mind, as the productions of contemporary genius. The discipline my mind had undergone, "Ne falleretur rotundo sono et versuum cursu, cincinnis et floribus; sed ut inspiceret quidnam subesset, quæ sedes, quod firmamentum, quis fundus verbis; an figuræ essent mera ornatura et orationis fucus: vel sanguinis e materiæ ipsius corde effluentis rubor quidam nativus et incalescentia genuina;" removed all obstacles to the appreciation of excellence in style without diminishing my delight. That I was thus prepared for the perusal of Mr. Bowles's sonnets and earlier poems, at once increased *their* influence and *my* enthusiasm. The great works of past ages seem, to a young man, things of another race, in respect to which his faculties must remain passive and submiss, even as to the stars and mountains. But the writings of a con-

temporary, perhaps not many years elder than himself, surrounded by the same circumstances, and disciplined by the same manners, possess a *reality* for him, and inspire an actual friendship as of a man for a man. His very admiration is the wind which fans and feeds his hope. The poems themselves assume the properties of flesh and blood. To recite, to extol, to contend for them, is but the payment of a debt due to one who exists to receive it.

There are indeed modes of teaching which have produced, and are producing, youths of a very different stamp; modes of teaching, in comparison with which we have been called on to despise our great public schools and universities,

> "In whose halls are hung
> Armory of the invincible knights of old"—

modes by which children are to be metamorphosed into prodigies. And prodigies, with a vengeance, have I known thus produced! Prodigies of self-conceit, shallowness, arrogance and infidelity! Instead of storing the memory, during the period when the memory is the predominant faculty, with facts for the after exercise of the judgment; and instead of awakening, by the noblest models, the fond and unmixed LOVE and ADMIRATION, which is the natural and graceful temper of early youth: *these* nurselings of improved pedagogy are taught to dispute and decide; to suspect all but their own and their lecturer's wisdom, and to hold nothing sacred from their contempt but their own contemptible arrogance; boy-graduates in all the technicals, and in all the dirty passions and impudence of anonymous criticism. To such dispositions alone can the admonition of Pliny be requisite—"Neque enim debet operibus ejus obesse, quod vivit. An si inter eos, quos nunquam vidimus, floruisset, non solum libros ejus, verum etiam imagines conquireremus, ejusdem nunc honor præsentis, et gratia quasi satietate languescet? At hoc pravum, malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, complecti, nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit." *Plin. Epist. Lib. I.*

I had just entered on my seventeenth year, when the sonnets of Mr. Bowles, twenty in number, and just then published in a quarto pamphlet, were first made known and presented to me by a schoolfellow, who had quitted us for the university, and who, during the whole time that he was in our first form, (or, in our school language,

a GRECIAN,) had been my patron and protector. I refer to Dr. Middleton, the truly learned, and every way excellent Bishop of Calcutta:

> "Qui laudibus amplis
> Ingenium celebrare meum, calamumque solebat,
> Calcar agens animo validum. Non omnia terræ
> Obruta! Vivit amor, vivit dolor! Ora negatur
> Dulcia conspicere; et fiere meminisse * relictum est."
>
> *Petr. Ep. Lib. I. Ep. I.*

It was a double pleasure to me, and still remains a tender recollection, that I should have received from a friend so revered, the first knowledge of a poet, by whose works, year after year, I was so enthusiastically delighted and inspired. My earliest acquaintances will not have forgotten the undisciplined eagerness and impetuous zeal with which I labored to make proselytes, not only of my companions, but of all with whom I conversed, of whatever rank, and in whatever place. As my school finances did not permit me to purchase copies, I made, within less than a year and an half, more than forty transcriptions, as the best presents I could offer to those who had in any way won my regard. And with almost equal delight did I receive the three or four following publications of the same author.

Though I have seen and known enough of mankind to be well aware that I shall perhaps stand alone in my creed, and that it will be well if I subject myself to no worse charge than that of singularity, I am not therefore deterred from avowing, that I regard, and ever have regarded the obligations of intellect, among the most sacred of the claims of gratitude. A valuable thought, or a particular train of thoughts, gives me additional pleasure, when I can safely refer and attribute it to the conversation or correspondence of another. My obligations to Mr. Bowles were indeed important, and for radical good. At a very premature age, even before my fifteenth year, I had bewildered myself in metaphysics, and in theological controversy. Nothing else pleased me. History, and particular facts lost all interest in my mind. Poetry, (though for a school-boy of that age, I was above par in English versification,

* I am most happy to have the necessity of informing the reader, that since this passage was written, the report of Dr. Middleton's death, on his voyage to India, has been proved erroneous. He lives, and long may he live; for I dare prophecy, that with his life only will his exertions for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his fellow men be limited.

and had already produced two or three compositions which, I may venture to say, without reference to my age, were somewhat above mediocrity, and which had gained me more credit than the sound good sense of my old master was at all pleased with,) poetry itself, yea novels and romances, became insipid to me. In my friendless wanderings on our *leave days*,* (for I was an orphan, and had scarce any connexions in London,) highly was I delighted if any passenger, especially if he were drest in black, would enter into conversation with me. For I soon found the means of directing it to my favorite subjects

> Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
> Fix'd fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

This preposterous pursuit was, beyond doubt, injurious, both to my natural powers, and to the progress of my education. It would perhaps have been destructive, had it been continued; but from this I was auspiciously withdrawn, partly indeed by an accidental introduction to an amiable family, chiefly, however, by the genial influence of a style of poetry so tender, and yet so manly, so natural and real, and yet so dignified and harmonious, as the sonnets, &c. of Mr. Bowles! Well were it for me, perhaps, had I never relapsed into the same mental disease; if I had continued to pluck the flower and reap the harvest from the cultivated surface, instead of delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths. But if, in after time, I have sought a refuge from bodily pain and mismanaged sensibility, in abstruse researches, which exercised the strength and subtlety of the understanding without awakening the feelings of the heart; still there was a long and blessed interval, during which my natural faculties were allowed to expand, and my original tendencies to develop themselves; my fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds.

The second advantage, which I owe to my early perusal and admiration of these poems, (to which let me add, though known to me at a somewhat later period, the Lewsdon Hill of Mr. Crow,) bears more immediately on my present subject. Among those with whom I conversed, there were, of course, very many who had

* The Christ Hospital phrase, not for holidays altogether, but for those on which the boys are permitted to go beyond the precincts of the school.

formed their taste, and their notions of poetry, from the writings of Mr. Pope and his followers; or, to speak more generally, in that school of French poetry, condensed and invigorated by English understanding, which had predominated from the last century. I was not blind to the merits of this school, yet, as from inexperience of the world, and consequent want of sympathy with the general subjects of these poems, they gave me little pleasure, I doubtless undervalued the *kind*, and with the presumption of youth, withheld from its masters the legitimate name of poets. I saw that the excellence of this kind consisted in just and acute observations on men and manners in an artificial state of society, as its matter and substance; and in the logic of wit, conveyed in smooth and strong epigrammatic couplets, as its *form*. Even when the subject was addressed to the fancy, or the intellect, as in the Rape of the Lock, or the Essay on Man; nay, when it was a consecutive narration, as in that astonishing product of matchless talent and ingenuity, Pope's translation of the Illiad; still a *point* was looked for at the end of each second line, and the whole was as it were a sorites, or, if I may exchange a logical for a grammatical metaphor, a *conjunction disjunctive* of epigrams. Meantime the matter and diction seemed to me characterised not so much by poetic thoughts, as by thoughts *translated* into the language of poetry. On this last point, I had occasion to render my own thoughts gradually more and more plain to myself, by frequent amicable disputes concerning Darwin's Botanic Garden, which, for some years, was greatly extolled, not only by the *reading* public in general, but even by those whose genius and natural robustness of understanding enabled them afterwards to act foremost in dissipating these "painted mists" that occasionally rise from the marshes at the foot of Parnassus. During my first Cambridge vacation, I assisted a friend in a contribution for a literary society in Devonshire; and in this I remember to have compared Darwin's work to the Russian palace of ice, glittering, cold and transitory. In the same essay, too, I assigned sundry reasons, chiefly drawn from a comparison of passages in the Latin poets with the original Greek, from which they were borrowed, for the preference of Collins's odes to those of Gray; and of the simile in Shakspeare:

> "How like a younker or a prodigal,
> The skarfed bark puts from her native bay

Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like a prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!"

to the imitation in the bard:

"Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
YOUTH at the prow and PLEASURE at the helm,
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects its evening prey."

(In which, by-the-by, the words "realm" and "sway" are rhymes dearly purchased.) I preferred the original, on the ground that in the imitation it depended wholly in the compositor's putting, or not putting, a *small capital*, both in this and in many other passages of the same poet, whether the words should be personifications, or mere abstracts. I mention this because, in referring various lines in Gray to their original in Shakspeare and Milton, and in the clear perception how completely all the propriety was lost in the transfer; I was, at that early period, led to a conjecture which, many years afterwards, was recalled to me from the same thought having been started in conversation, but far more ably, and developed more fully, by Mr. WORDSWORTH; namely, that this style of poetry, which I have characterised above, as translations of prose thoughts into poetic language, had been kept up by, if it did not wholly arise from, the custom of writing Latin verses, and the great importance attached to these exercises in our public schools. Whatever might have been the case in the fifteenth century, when the use of the Latin tongue was so general among learned men that Erasmus is said to have forgotten his native language; yet, in the present day, it is not to be supposed that a youth can *think* in Latin, or that he can have any other reliance on the force or fitness of his phrases, but the authority of the author from whence he has adopted them. Consequently, he must first prepare his thoughts, and then pick out, from Virgil, Horace, Ovid, or perhaps more compendiously from his Gradus,* halves and quarters of lines in which to embody them.

* In the Nutricia of Politian, there occurs this line:
"Pura coloratos interstrepit unda lapillos."
Casting my eye on a University prize poem, I met this line:
"Lactea purpureos interstrepit unda lapillos."

I never object to a certain degree of disputatiousness in a young man from the age of seventeen to that of four or five-and-twenty, provided I find him always arguing on one side of the question. The controversies occasioned by my unfeigned zeal for the honor of a favorite contemporary, then known to me only by his works, were of great advantage in the formation and establishment of my taste and critical opinions. In my defence of the lines running into each other, instead of closing at each couplet; and of natural language, neither bookish nor vulgar, neither redolent of the lamp or of the kennel, such as *I will remember thee;* instead of the same thought, tricked up in the rag-fair finery of

> ————Thy image on her wing
> Before my FANCY'S eye shall MEMORY bring,

I had continually to adduce the metre and diction of the Greek poets, from Homer to Theocritus, inclusive; and still more of our elder English poets, from Chaucer to Milton. Nor was this all. But as it was my constant reply to authorities brought against me from later poets of great name, that no authority could avail in opposition to TRUTH, NATURE, LOGIC, and the LAWS OF UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR; actuated, too, by my former passion for metaphysical investigations, I labored at a solid foundation on which, permanently, to ground my opinions in the component faculties of the human mind itself, and their comparative dignity and importance. According to the faculty, or source, from which the pleasure given by any poem or passage was derived, I estimated the merit of such poem or passage. As the result of all my reading and meditation, I abstracted two critical aphorisms, deeming them to comprise the conditions and criteria of poetic style; first, that not the poem which we have *read*, but that to which we *return*, with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power, and claims the name of *essential poetry*. Second, that whatever lines can be translated into other words of the same language, without diminution of their significance, either in sense or association, or in any worthy feeling, are so far vicious in their diction. Be it, however, observed, that I excluded from the list of worthy feelings, the pleasure derived

Now look out in the Gradus for *Purus*, and you find, as the first synonyme, *lacteus;* for *coloratus*, and the first synonyme is *purpureus*. I mention this by way of elucidating one of the most ordinary processes in the *ferrumination* of these centos.

from mere novelty, in the reader, and the desire of exciting wonderment at his powers in the author. Oftentimes since then, in perusing French tragedies, I have fancied two marks of admiration at the end of each line, as hyeroglyphics of the author's own admiration at his own cleverness. Our genuine admiration of a great poet is a continuous *under-current* of feeling; it is every where present, but seldom any where as a separate excitement. I was wont boldly to affirm, that it would be scarcely more difficult to push a stone out from the pyramids with the bare hand, than to alter a word, or the position of a word, in Milton or Shakspeare, (in their most important works at least,) without making the author say something else, or something worse than he does say. One great distinction I appeared to myself to see plainly, between even the characteristic faults of our elder poets, and the false beauty of the moderns. In the former, from DONNE to COWLEY, we find the most fantastic out-of-the-way thoughts, but in the most pure and genuine mother English; in the latter, the most obvious thoughts in language the most fantastic and arbitrary. Our faulty elder poets sacrificed the passion, and passionate flow of poetry, to the subtleties of intellect, and to the starts of wit; the moderns to the glare and glitter of a perpetual, yet broken and heterogeneous imagery, or rather to an amphibious something, made up half of image, and half of abstract* meaning. The one sacrificed the heart to the head, the other both heart and head to point and drapery.

The reader must make himself acquainted with the general style of composition that was at that time deemed poetry, in order to understand and account for the effect produced on me by the SONNETS, the MONODY at MATLOCK, and the HOPE, of Mr. Bowles; for it is peculiar to original genius to become less and less *striking*, in proportion to its success in improving the taste and judgment of its contemporaries. The poems of WEST, indeed, had the merit of chaste and manly diction, but they were cold; and, if I may so express it, only *dead-colored*; while in the best of Warton's, there is a stiffness, which too often gives them the appearance of imitations from the Greek. Whatever relation, therefore, of cause or impulse, Percy's collection of Ballads may bear to the most *popular*

* I remember a ludicrous instance in the poem of a young tradesman:

"No more will I endure love's pleasing pain,
Or round my *heart's leg* tie his galling chain."

poems of the present day; yet, in the more sustained and elevated style of the then living poets, Bowles and Cowper * were, to the best of my knowledge, the first who combined natural thoughts with natural diction; the first who reconciled the heart with the head.

It is true, as I have before mentioned, that from diffidence in my own powers, I for a short time adopted a laborious and florid diction, which I myself deemed, if not absolutely vicious, yet of very inferior worth. Gradually, however, my practice conformed to my better judgment; and the compositions of my twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth years, (*ex. gr.* the shorter blank verse poems, the lines which are now adopted in the introductory part of the VISION, in the present collection in Mr. Southey's Joan of Arc, 2d book, 1st edition, and the Tragedy of REMORSE,) are not more below my present ideal in respect of the general tissue of the style, than those of the latest date. Their faults were, at least, a remnant of the former leaven, and among the many who have done me the honor of putting my poems in the same class with those of my betters, the one or two who have pretended to bring examples of affected simplicity from my volume, have been able to adduce but one instance, and that out of a copy of verses half ludicrous, half splenetic, which I intended, and had myself characterized, as *sermoni propriora*.

Every reform, however necessary, will by weak minds be carried to an excess, that itself will need reforming. The reader will excuse me for noticing, that I myself was the first to expose *risu honesto* the three sins of poetry, one or the other of which is the most likely to beset a young writer. So long ago as the publication of the second number of the monthly magazine, under the name of NEHEMIAH HIGGENBOTTOM, I contributed three sonnets, the first of which had for its object to excite a good-natured laugh, at the spirit of *doleful egotism*, and at the recurrence of favorite phrases, with the double defect of being at once trite and licentious.

* Cowper's Task was published some time before the sonnets of Mr. Bowles, but I was not familiar with it till many years afterwards. The vein of satire which runs through that excellent poem, together with the sombre hue of its religious opinions, would probably, *at that time*, have prevented its laying any strong hold on my affections. The love of nature seems to have led Thomson to a cheerful religion; and a gloomy religion to have led Cowper to a love of nature. The one would carry his fellow-men along with him into nature; the other flies to nature from his fellow-men. In chastity of diction, however, and the harmony of blank verse, Cowper leaves Thomson unmeasurably below him; yet still I feel the latter to have been the *born poet*.

The second, on low, creeping language and thoughts, under the pretence of *simplicity*. And the third, the phrases of which were borrowed entirely from my own poems, on the indiscriminate use of elaborate and swelling language and imagery. The reader will find them in the note * below, and will, I trust, regard them as reprinted for biographical purposes, and not for their poetic merits. So general at that time, and so decided was the opinion concerning the characteristic vices of my style, that a celebrated physician, (now, alas! no more,) speaking of me, in other respects, with his usual kindness, to a gentleman who was about to meet me at a dinner party, could not, however, resist giving him a hint not to mention the "*House that Jack built*" in my presence, for "that I was as *sore as a bile* about that sonnet;" he not knowing that I was, myself, the author of it.

* SONNET I.

Pensive at eve, on the *hard* world I mused,
And *my poor* heart was sad; so at the MOON
I gazed, and sighed, and sighed; for ah, how soon
Eve saddens into night! mine eyes perused
With tearful vacancy the *dampy* grass
That wept and glitter'd in the *paly* ray:
And I *did pause me* on my lonely way,
And *mused me* on the *wretched ones* that pass
O'er the bleak heath of sorrow. But alas!
Most of *myself* I thought! when it befel,
That the *soothe* spirit of the *breezy* wood
Breath'd in mine ear: "All this is very well,
But much of ONE thing is for NO thing good."
Oh *my poor heart's* INEXPLICABLE SWELL!

SONNET II.

Oh I do love thee, meek SIMPLICITY!
For of thy lays the lulling simpleness
Goes to my heart, and soothes each small distress,
Distress tho' small, yet haply great to me;
'Tis true, on Lady Fortune's gentlest pad
I amble on; and yet I know not why
So sad I am! but should a friend and I
Frown, pout and part, then I am *very* sad.
And then with sonnets and with sympathy
My dreamy bosom's mystic woes I pall;
Now of my false friend plaining plaintively,
Now raving at mankind in general;
But whether sad or fierce, 'tis simple all,
All very simple, meek SIMPLICITY!

SONNET III.

And this reft house is that, the which he built,
Lamented Jack! and here his malt he pil'd,
Cautious in vain! these rats, that squeak so wild,
Squeak not unconscious of their father's guilt.
Did he not see her gleaming thro' the glade?
Belike 'twas she, the maiden all forlorn.
What tho' she milk no cow with crumpled horn,
Yet, *aye* she haunts the dale where *erst* she stray'd;
And *aye*, beside her stalks her amorous knight!
Still on his thighs their wonted brogues are worn,
And thro' those brogues, still tatter'd and betorn,
His hindward charms gleam an unearthly white.
Ah! thus thro' broken clouds at night's high noon,
Peeps in fair fragments forth the full orb'd harvest moon!

The following anecdote will not be wholly out of place here, and may, perhaps, amuse the reader. An amateur performer in verse expressed to a common friend, a strong desire to be introduced to me, but hesitated in accepting my friend's immediate offer, on the score that "he was, he must acknowledge, the author of a confounded severe epigram on my *Ancient Mariner*, which had given me great pain." I assured my friend that if the epigram was a good one, it would only increase my desire to become acquainted with the author, and begged to hear it recited: when, to my no less surprise than amusement, it proved to be one which I had myself some time before written, and inserted in the Morning Post.

To the Author of the Ancient Mariner.

Your poem must eternal be,
Dear sir, it cannot fail,
For 'tis incomprehensible,
And without head or tail.

CHAPTER II.

Supposed irritability of men of genius—Brought to the test of facts—Causes and Occasions of the charge—Its injustice.

I have often thought that it would be neither uninstructive nor unamusing to analyze and bring forward into distinct consciousness, that complex feeling, with which readers in general take part against the author, in favor of the critic; and the readiness with which they apply to *all* poets the old sarcasm of Horace upon the scribblers of his time, "Genus irritabile vatum." A debility and dimness of the imaginative power, and a consequent necessity of reliance on the immediate impressions of the senses, do, we well know, render the mind liable to superstition and fanaticism. Having a deficient portion of internal and proper warmth, minds of this class seek in the crowd *circum fana* for a warmth in common, which they do not possess singly. Cold and phlegmatic in their own nature, like damp hay, they heat and inflame by coacervation; or, like bees, they become restless and irritable through the increased temperature of collected multitudes. Hence the German word for fanaticism (such, at least, was its original import,) is derived from the swarming of bees, namely, Schwarmen, Schwarmery. The passion being in an inverse proportion to the insight, *that* the more vivid as *this* the less distinct, anger is the inevitable consequence. The absence of all foundation within their own minds for that which they yet believe both true and indispensable for their safety and happiness, cannot but produce an uneasy state of feeling, an involuntary sense of fear, from which nature has no means of rescuing herself but by anger. Experience informs us, that the first defence of weak minds is to recriminate.

> "There's no Philosopher but sees,
> That rage and fear are one disease;
> Tho' that may burn, and this may freeze,
> They're both alike the ague."
>
> MAD OX.

But where the ideas are vivid, and there exists an endless power of combining and modifying them, the feelings and affections blend

more easily and intimately with these ideal creations, than with the objects of the senses; the mind is affected by thoughts, rather than by things; and only then feels the requisite interest, even for the most important events and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into *thoughts*. The sanity of the mind is between superstition with fanaticism on the one hand, and enthusiasm with indifference and a diseased slowness to action on the other. For the conceptions of the mind may be so vivid and adequate as to preclude that impulse to the realizing of them, which is strongest and most restless in those who possess more than mere *talent*, (or the faculty of appropriating and applying the knowledge of others,) yet still want something of the creative and self-sufficing power of absolute *genius*. For this reason, therefore, they are men of *commanding* genius. While the former rest content between thought and reality, as it were in an intermundium, of which their own living spirit supplies the *substance*, and their imagination the ever varying *form*; the latter must impress their preconceptions on the world without, in order to present them back to their own view with the satisfying degree of clearness, distinctness, and individuality. These, in tranquil times, are formed to exhibit a perfect poem in palace, or temple, or landscape-garden; or a tale of romance in canals that join sea with sea, or in walls of rock, which, shouldering back the billows, imitate the power, and supply the benevolence of nature to sheltered navies; or in aqueducts, that, arching the wide vale from mountain to mountain, give a Palmyra to the desert. But, alas! in times of tumult, they are the men destined to come forth as the shaping spirit of Ruin, to destroy the wisdom of ages, in order to substitute the fancies of a day, and to change kings and kingdoms, as the wind shifts and shapes the clouds.* The records of biography seem to confirm this theory. The men of the greatest genius, as far as we can judge from their own works, or from the accounts of their contemporaries, appear to have been of calm and tranquil temper in all that related to themselves. In the inward assurance of permanent fame, they seem to have been either indifferent or resigned with regard to immediate

* "Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough;—
We'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff."

reputation. Through all the works of Chaucer, there reigns a cheerfulness, a manly hilarity, which makes it almost impossible to doubt a correspondent habit of feeling in the author himself. Shakspeare's evenness and sweetness of temper were almost proverbial in his own age. That this did not arise from ignorance of his own comparative greatness, we have abundant proof in his sonnets, which could scarcely have been known to Mr. Pope * when he asserted that our great bard "grew immortal in his own despite." Speaking of one whom he had celebrated, and contrasting the duration of his works with that of his personal existence, Shakspeare adds:

> "I too will have my kings, that take
> From me the sign of life and death;
> Kingdoms shall shift about like clouds,
> Obedient to my breath."
>
> WORDSWORTH'S ROB ROY.

> "Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
> Tho' I once gone, to all the world must die;
> The earth can yield me but a common grave,
> When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.
> Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
> Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
> And *tongues to be* your being shall rehearse,
> When all the breathers of this world are dead;
> You still shall live, such virtue hath my pen,
> Where breath most breathes, e'en in the mouth of men."
>
> SONNET 81st.

* Mr. Pope was under the common error of his age, an error far from being sufficiently exploded, even at the present day. It consists, (as I explained at large, and proved in detail in my public lectures,) in mistaking for the *essentials* of the Greek stage, certain rules which the wise poets imposed upon themselves, in order to render all the remaining parts of the drama, consistent with those that had been forced upon them by circumstances independent of their will; out of which circumstances the drama itself arose. The circumstances in the time of Shakspeare, which it was equally out of his power to alter, were different, and such as, in my opinion, allowed a far wider sphere, and a deeper and more human interest. Critics are too apt to forget that *rules* are but means to an end; consequently, where the ends are different, the rules must be likewise so. We must have ascertained what the end *is* before we can determine what the rules *ought* to be. Judging under this impression, I did not hesitate to declare my full conviction, that the consummate judgment of Shakspeare, not only in the general construction, but in all the *detail* of his dramas, impressed me with greater wonder than even the might of his genius, or the depth of his philosophy. The substance of these lectures I hope soon to publish; and it is but a debt of justice to myself and my friends, to notice, that the first course of lectures, which differed from the following courses only by occasionally varying the illustrations of the same thoughts, was addressed to very numerous, and, I need not add, respectable audiences, at the royal institution, before Mr. Schlegel gave his lectures on the same subjects at Vienna.

I have taken the first that occurred; but Shakspeare's readiness to praise his rivals, ore pleno, and the confidence of his own equality with those whom he deemed most worthy of his praise, are alike manifested in the 86th sonnet:

> "Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
> Bound for the praise of all-too precious you,
> That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
> Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
> Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
> Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
> No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
> Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
> He, nor that affable familiar ghost,
> Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
> As victors of my silence cannot boast;
> I was not sick of any fear from thence!
> But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
> Then lack'd I matter, that enfeebled mine."

In Spenser, indeed, we trace a mind constitutionally tender, delicate, and, in comparison with his three great compeers, I had almost said, *effeminate*; and this additionally saddened by the unjust persecution of Burleigh, and the severe calamities which overwhelmed his latter days. These causes have diffused over all his compositions "a melancholy grace," and have drawn forth occasional strains, the more pathetic from their gentleness. But no where do we find the least trace of irritability, and still less of quarrelsome or affected contempt of his censurers.

The same calmness, and even greater self-possession, may be affirmed of Milton, as far as his poems and poetic character are concerned. He reserved his anger for the enemies of religion, freedom, and his country. My mind is not capable of forming a more august conception, than arises from the contemplation of this great man in his latter days: poor, sick, old, blind, slandered, persecuted,

> "Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,"

in an age in which he was as little understood by the party *for* whom as by that *against* whom, he had contended; and among men before whom he strode so far as to *dwarf* himself by the distance; yet still listening to the music of his own thoughts, or if

additionally cheered, yet cheered only by the prophetic faith of two or three solitary individuals, he did nevertheless

> ——— "Argue not
> Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
> Of heart or hope; but still bore up, and steer'd
> Right onward."

From others only do we derive our knowledge that Milton, in his latter day, had his scorners and detractors; and even in his day of youth and hope, that he had enemies would have been unknown to us, had they not been likewise the enemies of his country.

I am well aware, that in advanced stages of literature, when there exists many and excellent models, a high degree of talent, combined with taste and judgment, and employed in works of imagination, will acquire for a man the *name* of a great genius; though even that *analogon* of genius, which, in certain states of society, may even render his writings more popular than the absolute reality could have done, would be sought for in vain in the mind and temper of the author himself. Yet even in instances of this kind, a close examination will often detect that the irritability, which has been attributed to the author's *genius* as its cause, did really originate in an ill conformation of body, obtuse pain, or constitutional defect of pleasurable sensation. What is charged to the *author*, belongs to the *man*, who would probably have been still more impatient, but for the humanizing influences of the very pursuit, which yet bears the blame of his irritability.

How then are we to explain the easy credence generally given to this charge, if the charge itself be not, as we have endeavored to show, supported by experience? This seems to me of no very difficult solution. In whatever country literature is widely diffused, there will be many who mistake an intense desire to possess the reputation of poetic genius, for the actual powers, and original tendencies which constitute it. But men, whose dearest wishes are fixed on objects wholly out of their own power, become in all cases more or less impatient and prone to anger. Besides, though it may be paradoxical to assert, that a man can know one thing, and believe the opposite, yet assuredly, a vain person may have so habitually indulged the wish, and persevered in the attempt to appear what he is not, as to become himself one of his own proselytes. Still, as this counterfeit and artificial persuasion must differ, even

in the person's own feelings, from a real sense of inward power, what can be more natural than that this difference should betray itself in suspicious and jealous irritability? Even as the flowery sod, which covers a hollow, may be often detected by its shaking and trembling?

But, alas! the multitude of books, and the general diffusion of literature, have produced other and more lamentable effects in the world of letters, and such as are abundant to explain, though by no means to justify, the contempt with which the best grounded complaints of injured genius are rejected as frivolous, or entertained as matter of merriment. In the days of Chaucer and Gower, our language might (with due allowance for the imperfections of a simile) be compared to a wilderness of vocal reeds, from which the favorites only of Pan or Apollo could construct even the rude Syrinx; and from this the *constructors* alone could elicit strains of music. But now, partly by the labors of successive poets, and in part by the more artificial state of society and social intercourse, language, mechanized as it were into a barrel-organ, supplies at once both instrument and tune. Thus even the deaf may play, so as to delight the many. Sometimes, (for it is with similes as it is with jests at a wine table, one is sure to suggest another,) I have attempted to illustrate the present state of our language, in its relation to literature, by a press-room of larger and smaller stereotype pieces, which, in the present anglo-gallican fashion of unconnected, epigrammatic periods, it requires but an ordinary portion of ingenuity to vary indefinitely, and yet still produce something, which, if *not* sense, will be so like it as to do as well. Perhaps better; for it spares the reader the trouble of thinking; prevents vacancy, while it indulges indolence; and secures the memory from all danger of an intellectual plethora. Hence, of all trades, literature at present demands the least talent or information; and, of all modes of literature, the manufacturing of poems. The difference, indeed, between these and the works of genius, is not less than between an egg and an egg-shell; yet at a distance they both look alike.

Now it is no less remarkable than true, with how little examination works of polite literature are commonly perused, not only by the mass of readers, but by men of the first rate ability, till some accident or chance * discussion have aroused their attention, and

* In the course of my lectures, I had occasion to point out the almost faultless position and choice of words, in Mr. Pope's *original* compositions, particularly in

put them on their guard. And hence, individuals below mediocrity not less in natural power than acquired knowledge; nay, bunglers that had failed in the lowest mechanic crafts, and whose presumption is in due proportion to their want of sense and sensibility; men who, being first scribblers from idleness and ignorance, next become libellers from envy and malevolence, have been able to drive a successful trade in the employment of booksellers, nay, have raised themselves into temporary name and reputation with the public at large, by that most powerful of all adulation, the appeal to the bad and malignant passions of mankind.* But as it is the

his satires and moral essays, for the purpose of comparing them with his translation of Homer, which I do not stand alone in regarding as the main source of our pseudo-poetic diction. And this, by-the-by, is an additional confirmation of a remark made, I believe, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that next to the man who formed and elevated the taste of the public, he that corrupted it is commonly the greatest genius. Among other passages, I analyzed, sentence by sentence, and almost word by word, the popular lines,

"As when the moon, resplendant lamp of light," &c.

much in the same way as has been since done, in an excellent article on Chalmers' British Poets, in the Quarterly Review. The impression on the audience, in general, was sudden and evident: and a number of enlightened and highly educated individuals, who at different times afterwards addressed me on the subject, expressed their wonder, that truth so obvious should not have struck them *before*; but at the same time acknowledged (so much had they been accustomed, in reading poetry, to receive pleasure from the separate images and phrases successively, without asking themselves whether the collective meaning was sense or nonsense,) that they might in all probability have read the same passage again twenty times with undiminished admiration, and without once reflecting, that "αςρα φασινην αμφι δεληνην φαινει' αριπρεπεςα" (i. e. the stars around, or near the full moon, shine pre-eminently bright) conveys a just and happy image of a moonlight sky: while it is difficult to determine whether in the lines,

"Around *her throne* the vivid planets *roll*,
And stars *unnumber'd gild* the *glowing pole*,"

the sense or the diction be the more absurd. My answer was, that though I had derived peculiar advantages from my school discipline, and though my *general* theory of poetry was the same then as now, I had yet experienced the same sensations myself, and felt almost as if I had been newly couched, when by Mr. Wordsworth's conversation, I had been induced to re-examine with impartial strictness Gray's celebrated elegy. I had long before detected the defects in "the Bard;" but "the Elegy" I had considered as proof against all fair attacks; and to this day I cannot read either without delight, and a portion of enthusiasm. At all events, whatever pleasure I may have lost by the clearer perception of the faults in certain passages, has been more than repaid to me, by the additional delight with which I read the remainder.

* Especially "in this AGE OF PERSONALITY, this age of literary and political GOSSIPING, when the meanest insects are worshipped with a sort of Egyptian superstition, if only the brainless head be atoned for by the sting of personal malignity in the tail! When the most vapid satires have become the objects of a keen public interest, purely from the number of contemporary characters named in the patchwork notes, (which possess, however, the comparative merit of being more poetical than the text,) and because, to increase the stimulus, the author has sagaciously left his own name for whispers and conjectures! In an age, when even sermons are published with a double appendix stuffed with *names*—in a generation so transformed from the characteristic reserve of Britons, that from the

nature of scorn, envy, and all malignant propensities, to require a quick change of objects, such writers are sure, sooner or later, to awake from their dream of vanity to disappointment and neglect, with embittered and envenomed feelings. Even during their short-lived success, sensible, in spite of themselves, on what a shifting foundation it rested, they resent the mere refusal of praise, as a robbery, and at the justest censures kindle at once into violent and undisciplined abuse; till the acute disease changing into chronical, the more deadly as the less violent, they become the fit instruments of literary detraction and moral slander. They are then no longer to be questioned without exposing the complainant to ridicule, because, forsooth, they are *anonymous* critics, and authorized as "synodical individuals" * to speak of themselves plurali majestatico! As if literature formed a cast, like that of the PARAS in Hindostan, who, however maltreated, must not dare to deem themselves wronged! As if that, which in all other cases adds a deeper die to slander, the circumstance of its being anonymous, here acted only to make the slanderer inviolable! Thus, in *part*, from the accidental tempers of individuals, (men of undoubted talent, but not men of genius,) tempers rendered yet more irritable by their desire to *appear* men of genius; but still more effectively by the excesses of the mere *counterfeits* both of talent and genius; the number, too, being so incomparably greater of those who are *thought* to be, than of those who really *are* men of real genius; and in part from the natural, but not therefore the less partial and unjust distinction, made by the public itself between *literary* and all other property; I believe the prejudice to have arisen, which considers an unusual irascibility concerning the reception of its products as characteristic of genius. It might correct the moral feelings of a

ephemeral sheet of a London newspaper, to the everlasting Scotch Professorial Quarto, almost every publication exhibits or flatters the epidemic distemper; that the very 'last year's rebuses' in the Ladies' Diary, are answered in a serious elegy '*on my father's death*,' with the name and habitat of the elegiac Œdipus subscribed; and '*other ingenius solutions were likewise given*' to the said *rebuses* —not, as heretofore, by Crito, Philander, A, B, Y, &c.—but by fifty or sixty plain English surnames at full length, with their several places of abode! In an age, when a bashful *Philalethes, or Philelcutheros* is as rare on the title-pages, and among the signatures of our magazines, as a real name used to be in the days of our shy and notice-shunning grandfathers! When (more exquisite than all) I see an EPIC POEM (spirits of Maro and Mæonides make ready to welcome your new compeer!) advertised with the special recommendation, that the said EPIC POEM contains more than an hundred names of *living* persons."

FRIEND, No. 10.

* A phrase of Andrew Marvel's.

numerous class of readers, to suppose a review set on foot, the object of which was to criticise all the chief works presented to the public by our ribbon-weavers, calico-printers, cabinet-makers, and china-manufacturers; a review conducted in the same spirit, and which should take the same freedom with personal character as our literary journals. They would scarcely, I think, deny their belief, not only that the "genus irritabile" would be found to include many other *species* beside that of bards, but that the irritability of *trade* would soon reduce the resentments of *poets* into mere shadow-fights (σκιομαχιας) in the comparison. Or is wealth the only rational object of human interest? Or even if this were admitted, has the poet no property in his works? Or is it a rare or culpable case, that he who serves at the altar of the muses should be compelled to derive his maintenance from the altar, when, too, he has perhaps deliberately abandoned the fairest prospects of rank and opulence in order to devote himself, an entire and undistracted man, to the instruction or refinement of his fellow-citizens? Or should we pass by all higher objects and motives, all disinterested benevolence, and even that ambition of lasting praise, which is at once the crutch and ornament, which at once supports and betrays the infirmity of human virtue; is the character and property of the individual who labors for our intellectual pleasures, less entitled to a share of our fellow feeling than that of the wine merchant or milliner? Sensibility, indeed, both quick and deep, is not only a characteristic feature, but may be deemed a component part of genius. But it is no less an essential mark of true genius, that its sensibility is excited by any other cause more powerfully than by its own personal interests, for this plain reason, that the man of genius lives most in the ideal world, in which the present is still constituted by the future or the past; and because his feelings have been habitually associated with thoughts and images, to the number, clearness, and vivacity of which the sensation of *self* is always in an inverse proportion. And yet, should he perchance have occasion to repel some false charge, or to rectify some erroneous censure, nothing is more common, than for the many to mistake the general liveliness of his manner and language, *whatever* is the subject, for the effects of peculiar irritation from its accidental relation to himself.*

* This is one instance, among many, of deception, by telling the half of a fact, and omitting the other half, when it is from their mutual counteraction and neu-

For myself, if from my own feelings, or from the less suspicious test of the observations of others, I had been made aware of any literary testiness or jealousy, I trust that I should have been, however, neither silly or arrogant enough to have burthened the imperfection on GENIUS. But an experience, (and I should not need documents in abundance to prove my words, if I added,) a tried experience of twenty years has taught me that the original sin of my character consists in a careless indifference to public opinion, and to the attacks of those who influence it; that praise and admiration have become, yearly, less and less desirable, except as marks of sympathy; nay, that it is difficult and distressing to me, to think with any interest even about the sale and profit of my works, important as, in my present circumstances, such considerations must needs be. Yet it never occurred to me to believe, or fancy, that the quantum of intellectual power bestowed on me by nature or education was in any way connected with this habit of my feelings; or, that it needed any other parents, or fosterers, than constitutional indolence, aggravated into languor by ill-health; the accumulating embarrassments of procrastination; the mental cowardice, which is the inseparable companion of procrastination, and which makes us anxious to think and converse on any thing rather than on what concerns ourselves; in fine, all those close vexations, whether chargeable on my faults or my fortunes, which leave me but little grief to spare for evils comparatively distant and alien.

Indignation at literary wrongs, I leave to men born under happier stars. I cannot *afford it*. But so far from condemning those who can, I deem it a writer's duty, and think it creditable to his heart, to feel and express a resentment proportioned to the grossness of the provocation, and the importance of the object. There is no profession on earth which requires an attention so early, so long, or

tralization, that the *whole* truth arises, as a tertiam aliquid different from either. Thus in Dryden's famous line, "Great wit" (which here means genius) "to madness sure is near allied." Now, as far as the profound sensibility, which is doubtless *one* of the components of genius, were alone considered, single and unbalanced, it might be fairly described as exposing the individual to a greater chance of mental derangement; but then a more than usual rapidity of association, a more than usual power of passing from thought to thought, and image to image, is a component equally essential; and in the due modification of each by the other, the GENIUS itself consists; so that it would be just as fair to describe the earth as in imminent danger of exorbitating, or of falling into the sun, according as the assertor of the absurdity *confined* his attention either to the projectile or to the attractive force exclusively.

so unintermitting, as that of poetry; and, indeed, as that of literary composition in general, if it be such as at all satisfies the demands both of the taste and of sound logic. How difficult and delicate a task even the mere mechanism of verse is, may be conjectured from the failure of those who have attempted poetry late in life. Where, then, a man has, from his earliest youth, devoted his whole being to an object which, by the admission of all civilized nations in all ages, is honorable as a pursuit, and glorious as an attainment; what, of all that relates to himself and his family, if only we except his moral character, can have fairer claims to his protection, or more authorize acts of self-defence than the elaborate products of his intellect, and intellectual industry? Prudence itself would command us to *show*, even if defect or diversion of natural sensibility had prevented us from *feeling*, a due interest and qualified anxiety for the offspring and representatives of our nobler being. I know it, alas! by woful experience! I have laid too many eggs in the hot sand of this wilderness, the world, with ostrich carelessness and ostrich oblivion. The greater part, indeed, have been trod under foot, and are forgotten; but yet no small number have crept forth into life, some to furnish feathers for the caps of others, and still more to plume the shafts in the quivers of my enemies; of them that, unprovoked, have lain in wait against my soul.

"Sic vos, non vobis mellificatis, apes!"

An instance in confirmation of the note, p. 27, occurs to me as I am correcting this sheet, with the FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS open before me. Mr. Seward first traces Fletcher's lines:

"More foul diseases than e'er yet the hot
Sun bred through his burnings, while the dog
Pursues the raging lion, throwing the fog
And deadly vapour from his angry breath,
Filling the lower world with plague and death,"—

To Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar,

"The rampant lion hunts he fast
With dogs of noisome breath,
Whose baleful barking brings, in haste,
Pyne, plagues, and dreary death!"

He then takes occasion to introduce Homer' simile of the sight of Achilles's shield to Priam, compared with the Dog Star, literally thus—

"For this indeed is most splendid, but it was made an evil sign, and brings many a consuming disease to wretched mortals." Nothing can be more simple as a description, or more accurate as a simile; which, says Mr. S. is thus *finely* translated by Mr. Pope:

> "Terrific Glory! for his burning breath
> Taints the *red* air with fevers, plagues, and death!"

Now here (not to mention the tremendous bombast) the *Dog Star*, so called, is turned into a *real* Dog—a very odd Dog—a fire, fever, plague, and death-breathing, *red*-air-tainting Dog: and the whole *visual* likeness is lost, while the likeness in the *effects* is rendered absurd by the exaggeration. In Spenser and Fletcher, the thought is justifiable; for the images are at least consistent, and it was the intention of the writers to mark the seasons by this allegory of visualized *Pans*.

CHAPTER III.

The author's obligations to critics, and the probable occasion—Principles of modern criticism—Mr. Southey's works and character.

To anonymous critics in reviews, magazines, and news journals of various name and rank, and to satirists, with or without a name, in verse or prose, or in verse text aided by prose comment, I do seriously believe and profess, that I owe full two thirds of whatever reputation and publicity I happen to possess. For when the name of an individual has occurred so frequently, in so many works, for so great a length of time, the readers of these works, (which with a shelf or two of BEAUTIES, ELEGANT EXTRACTS and ANAS, form nine tenths of the reading public)* cannot but be familiar with the name, without distinctly remembering whether it was introduced for an eulogy or for censure. And this becomes the more likely, if (as I believe) the habit of perusing periodical works may be properly added to Averrhoe's † catalogue of ANTI-MNEMONICS, or weakeners of the memory. But where this has not been the case,

* For as to the devotees of the circulation libraries, I dare not compliment their *pass time*, or rather *kill time*, with the name of *reading*. Call it rather a sort of beggarly day-dreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing but laziness and a little mawkish sensibility; while the whole *materiel* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects, and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose. We should, therefore, transfer this species of amusement, (if indeed those can be said to retire *a musis*, who were never in their company, or relaxation be attributable to those whose bows are never bent,) from the genus, *reading*, to that comprehensive class characterized by the power of reconciling the contrary yet co-existing propensities of human nature, namely, indulgence of sloth and hatred of vacancy. In addition to novels and tales of chivalry in prose or rhyme, (by which last I mean neither rhythm nor metre,) this genus comprises as its species, gaming, swinging, or swaying on a chair or gate; spitting over a bridge; smoking; snuff-taking; tete-a-tete quarrels after dinner between husband and wife; conning, word by word, all the advertisements of the daily advertiser in a public house on a rainy day, &c. &c. &c.

† Ex. gr. Pediculos e capillis excerptus in arenam jacere incontusos; eating of unripe fruit; gazing on the clouds, and (in genere) on moveable things suspended in the air; riding among a multitude of camels; frequent laughter; listening to a series of jests and hurmorous anecdotes, as when (so to modernize the learned Saracen's meaning) one man's droll story of an Irishman, inevitably occasions another's droll story of a Scotchman, which, again, by the same sort of conjunction disjunctive, leads to some etourderie of a Welchman, and that again to some sly hit of a Yorkshireman; the habit of reading tomb-stones in churchyards, &c. By-the-by, this catalogue, strange as it may appear, is not insusceptible of a sound psychological commentary.

yet the reader will be apt to suspect, that there must be something more than usually strong and extensive in a reputation, that could either require or stand so merciless and long-continued a cannonading. Without any feeling of *anger*, therefore, (for which, indeed, on my own account, I have no pretext,) I may yet be allowed to express some degree of *surprise*, that after having run the critical gauntlet for a certain class of faults which I *had*, nothing having come before the judgment seat in the interim, I should, year after year, quarter after quarter, month after month, (not to mention sundry petty periodicals of still quicker revolution, "or weekly or diurnal,") have been for at least seventeen years consecutively, dragged forth by them into the foremost ranks of the *proscribed*, and forced to abide the brunt of abuse, for faults directly opposite, and which I certainly had not. How shall I explain this?

Whatever may have been the case with others, I certainly cannot attribute this persecution to personal dislike, or to envy, or to feelings of vindictive animosity. Not to the former; for, with the exception of a very few who are my intimate friends, and were so before they were known as authors, I have had little other acquaintance with literary characters than what may be implied in an accidental introduction, or casual meeting in a mixt company. And, as far as words and looks can be trusted, I must believe that, even in these instances, I had excited no unfriendly disposition.* Neither

* Some years ago, a gentleman, the chief writer and conductor of a celebrated review, distinguished by its hostility to Mr. Southey, spent a day or two at Keswick. That he was, without diminution on this account, treated with every hospitable attention by Mr. Southey and myself, I trust I need not say. But one thing I may venture to notice, that at no period of my life do I remember to have received so many, and such high colored compliments in so short a space of time. He was likewise circumstantially informed by what series of accidents it had happened, that Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Southey, and I, had become neighbors; and how utterly unfounded was the supposition, that we considered ourselves as belonging to any common school, but that of good sense, confirmed by the long-established models of the best times of Greece, Rome, Italy, and England; and still more groundless the notion, that Mr. Southey, [for, as to myself, I have published so little, and that little of so little importance, as to make it almost ludicrous to mention my name at all,] could have been concerned in the formation of a poetic sect with Mr. Wordsworth, when so many of his works had been published, not only previously to any acquaintance between them, but before Mr. Wordsworth himself had written any thing but in a diction ornate, and uniformly sustained; when, too, the slightest examination will make it evident, that between those and the after writings of Mr. Southey, there exists no other difference than that of a progressive degree of excellence from progressive development of power, and progressive facility from habit and increase of experience. Yet among the first articles which this man wrote after his return from Keswick, we were characterized as "the School of whining and hypochondriacal poets that haunt the Lakes." In reply to a letter from the same gentleman, in which he had asked me, whether I was in earnest in prefering the style of Hooker to that of Dr. Johnson, and Jeremy Taylor to Burke, I stated, somewhat at large, the comparative excellences and defects which characterised our best prose writers,

by letter, or in conversation, have I ever had dispute or controversy beyond the common social interchange of opinions. Nay, where I had reason to suppose my convictions fundamentally different, it has been my habit, and I may add, the impulse of my nature, to assign the grounds of my belief, rather than the belief itself; and not to express dissent, till I could establish some points of complete sympathy, some grounds common to both sides, from which to commence its explanation.

Still less can I place these attacks to the charge of envy. The few pages which I have published, are of too distant a date; and the extent of their sale a proof too conclusive against their having been popular at any time, to render probable, I had almost said possible, the excitement of envy on *their* account; and the man who should envy me on any *other*, verily he must be *envy-mad!*

Lastly; with as little semblance of reason could I suspect any animosity towards me from vindictive feelings as the cause. I have before said, that my acquaintance with literary men has been limited and distant; and that I have had neither dispute nor controversy. From my first entrance into life, I have, with few and short intervals, lived either abroad or in retirement. My different essays on subjects of national interest, published at different times, first in the Morning Post and then in the Courier, with my courses of lectures on the principles of criticism as applied to Shakspeare and Milton, constitute my whole publicity; the only occasions on which

from the reformation to the first half of Charles II.; and that of those who had flourished during the present reign, and the preceding one. About twelve months afterwards, a review appeared on the same subject, in the concluding paragraph of which the reviewer asserts, that his chief motive for entering into the discussion, was to separate a rational and qualified admiration of our elder writers, from the indiscriminate enthusiasm of a recent school, who praised what they did not understand, and caricatured what they were unable to imitate. And, that no doubt might be left concerning the persons alluded to, the writer annexes the names of Miss Bailie, R. Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. For that which follows, I have only hear-say evidence, but yet such as demands my belief; viz. that on being questioned concerning this apparently wanton attack, more especially with reference to Miss Bailie, the writer had stated as his motives, that this lady, when at Edinburgh, had declined a proposal of introducing him to her; that Mr. Southey had written against him; and Mr. Wordsworth had talked contemptuously of him; but that as to *Coleridge*, he had noticed him merely because the names of Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge always went together. But if it were worth while to mix together, as ingredients, half the anecdotes which I either myself know to be true, or which I have received from men incapable of intentional falsehood, concerning the characters, qualifications, and motives of our annoymous critics, whose decisions are oracles for our reading public, I might safely borrow the words of the apocryphal Daniel; "*Give me leave*, O Sovereign Public, *and I shall slay this dragon without sword or staff.*" For the compound would be the "*Pitch, and fat, and hair, which Daniel took, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof, and put into the dragon's mouth, and so the dragon burst in sunder; and Daniel said*, Lo, these are the gods ye worship."

I *could* offend any member of the republic of letters. With one solitary exception, in which my words were first mis-stated, and then wantonly applied to an individual, I could never learn that I had excited the displeasure of any among my literary contemporaries. Having announced my intention to give a course of lectures on the characteristic merits and defects of the English poetry in its different eras; first, from Chaucer to Milton; second, from Dryden inclusive to Thompson; and third, from Cowper to the present day, I changed my plan, and confined my disquisition to the two former eras, that I might furnish no possible pretext for the unthinking to misconstrue, or the malignant to misapply, my words, and having stamped their own meaning on them, to pass them as current coin in the marts of garrulity or detraction.

Praises of the unworthy are felt by ardent minds as robberies of the deserving; and it is too true, and too frequent, that Bacon, Harrington, Machiavel and Spinosa, are *not* read, because Hume, Condillac, and Voltaire *are*. But in promiscuous company, no prudent man will oppugn the merits of a contemporary in his own supposed department; contenting himself with praising in his turn those whom he deems excellent. If I should ever deem it my duty at all to oppose the pretensions of individuals, I would oppose them in books which could be weighed and answered, in which I could evolve the whole of my reason and feelings, with their requisite limits and modifications; not in irrecoverable conversation, where, however strong the reasons might be, the feelings that prompted *them* would assuredly be attributed by some one or other to envy and discontent. Besides, I well know, and I trust, have acted on that knowledge, that it must be the ignorant and injudicious who extol the unworthy; and the eulogies of critics without taste or judgment, are the natural reward of authors without feeling or genius. "Sint unicuique sua premia."

How, then, dismissing, as I do, these three causes, am I to account for attacks, the long continuance and inveteracy of which it would require all three to explain? The solution may seem to have been given, or at least suggested, in a note to a preceding page. *I was in habits of intimacy with Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Southey!* This, however, transfers, rather than removes, the difficulty. Be it, that by an unconscionable extension of the old adage, "noscitur a socio," my literary friends are never under the water-fall of

criticism, but I must be wet through with the spray: yet, how came the torrent to descend upon *them?*

First, then, with regard to Mr. Southey. I well remember the general reception of his earlier publications, viz. the poems published with Mr. Lovell, under the names of Moschus and Bion; the two volumes of poems under his own name, and the Joan of Arc. The censures of the critics by profession are extant, and may be easily referred to:—careless lines, inequality in the merit of the different poems, and, (in the lighter works,) a predilection for the strange and whimsical; in short, such faults as might have been anticipated in a young and rapid writer, were indeed sufficiently enforced. Nor was there at that time wanting, a party spirit to aggravate the defects of a poet, who, with all the courage of uncorrupted youth, had avowed his zeal for a cause which he deemed that of liberty, and his abhorrence of oppression, by whatever name consecrated. But it was as little objected by others, as dreamt of by the poet himself, that he *preferred* careless and prosaic lines on rule and of forethought, or, indeed, that he pretended to any other art or theory of poetic diction beside that which we may all learn from Horace, Quintilian, the admirable dialogue de Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ, or Strada's Prolusions; if, indeed, natural good sense, and the early study of the best models in his own language, had not infused the same maxims more securely, and, if I may venture the expression, more vitally. All that could have been fairly deduced, was, that in his taste and estimation of writers, Mr. Southey agreed far more with Warton than with Johnson. Nor do I mean to deny that, at all times, Mr. Southey was of the same mind with Sir Philip Sydney, in preferring an excellent ballad in the *humblest* style of poetry, to twenty indifferent poems that strutted in the *highest*. And by what have his works, published since then, been characterized, each more strikingly than the preceding, but by greater splendor, a deeper pathos, profounder reflections, and a more sustained dignity of language and of metre? Distant may the period be—but whenever the time shall come when all his works shall be collected by some editor worthy to be his biographer, I trust, that an excerpta of all the passages in which his writings, name, and character, have been attacked, from the pamphlets and periodical works of the last twenty years, may be an accompaniment. Yet that it would prove medicinal in after times I dare not

hope; for as long as there are readers to be delighted with calumny, there will be found reviewers to calumniate, and such readers will become, in all probability, more numerous in proportion as a still greater diffusion of literature shall produce an increase of sciolists, and sciolism brings with it petulance and presumption. In times of old, books were as religious oracles; as literature advanced, they next became venerable preceptors; they then descended to the rank of instructive friends; and, as their numbers increased, they sunk still lower, to that of entertaining companions; and, at present, they seem degraded into culprits to hold up their hands at the bar of every self-elected, yet not the less peremptory, judge, who chooses to write from humour or interest, from enmity or arrogance, and to abide the decision, (in the words of Jeremy Taylor,) "of him that reads in malice, or him that reads after dinner."

The same gradual retrograde movement may be traced in the relation which the authors themselves have assumed toward their readers. From the lofty address of Bacon: "these are the meditations of Francis of Verulam, which, that posterity should be possessed of, he deemed *their* interest;" or from dedication to monarch or pontiff, in which the honour given was asserted in equipoise to the patronage acknowledged from PINDAR's

————'σε' ἄλλοι-
-ςι δ'ἄλλοι μεγάλοι. τό δ'ἔξοχον κορυ-
-φοῦται βασιλεῦσι. μάρσει
Πάσταισι τόρσιον.
Εἴη σὺ τε σῶσον
Υψᾶ χρόνον πατσῖν ἐμοῖ
Τᾶ τοξσαδε νικαφόροις
Ομιλῆσιν, προφανεν ξορίαν καθ' Ελ-
-λανας σοντα πανσᾶ.

OLYMP. OD. I.

Poets and Philosophers, rendered diffident by their very number, addressed themselves to "*learned* readers;" then aimed to conciliate the graces of "the *candid* reader;" till the critic, still rising as the author sunk, the amateurs of literature, collectively, were erected into a municipality of judges, and addressed as THE TOWN! And now, finally, all men being supposed able to read, and all read-

ers able to judge, the multitudinous PUBLIC, shaped into personal unity by the magic of abstraction, sits nominal despot on the throne of criticism. But, alas! as in other despotisms, it but echoes the decisions of its invisible ministers, whose intellectual claims to the guardianship of the muses seem, for the greater part, analogous to the physical qualifications which adapt their oriental brethren for the superintendence of the harem. Thus, it is said that St. Nepomuc was installed the guardian of bridges, because he had fallen over one, and sunk out of sight; thus, too, St. Cecilia is said to have been first propitiated by musicians, because, having failed in her own attempts, she had taken a dislike to the art, and all its successful professors. But I shall probably have occasion, hereafter, to deliver my convictions more at large concerning this state of things, and its influences on taste, genius, and morality.

In the "Thalaba," the "Madoc," and still more evidently in the unique * "Cid," the "Kehama," and as last, so best, the "Don Roderick," Southey has given abundant proof, "se cogitasse quam sit magnum dare aliquid in manus hominum: nec persuadere sibi posse, non sæpe tractandum quod placere et semper et omnibus cupiat." Plin. Ep. Lib. 7. Ep. 17. But, on the other hand, I guess, that Mr. Southey was quite unable to comprehend wherein could consist the crime or mischief of printing half a dozen or more playful poems; or, to speak more generally, compositions which would be enjoyed or passed over, according as the taste and humour of the reader might chance to be; provided they contained nothing immoral. In the present age, "perituræ parcere chartæ," is emphatically an unreasonable demand. The merest trifle he ever sent abroad had tenfold better claims to its ink and paper, than all the silly criticisms, which prove no more than that the critic was not one of those for whom the trifle was written, and than all the grave exhortations to a greater reverence for the public. As if the passive page of a book, by having an epigram or doggerel tale impressed on it, instantly assumed at once locomotive power

* I have ventured to call it "unique," not only because I know no work of the kind in our language (if we except a few chapters of the old translation of Froissart,) none which, uniting the charms of romance and history, keeps the imagination so constantly on the wing, and yet leaves so much for after reflection; but likewise, and chiefly, because it is a compilation which, in the various excellences of translation, selection, and arrangement, required, and proves greater genius in the compiler, as living in the present state of society, than in the original composers.

and a sort of ubiquity, so as to flutter and buz in the ear of the public to the sore annoyance of the said mysterious personage. But what gives an additional and more ludicrous absurdity to these lamentations is the curious fact, that if, in a volume of poetry, the critic should find poem or passage which he deems more especially worthless, he is sure to select and reprint it in the review; by which, on his own grounds, he wastes as much more paper than the author as the copies of a fashionable review are more numerous than those of the original book; in some, and those the most prominent instances, as ten thousand to five hundred. I know nothing that surpasses the vileness of deciding on the merits of a poet or painter (not by characteristic defects; for where there is genius, *these* always point to his characteristic *beauties;* but) by accidental failures or faulty passages; except the impudence of defending it, as the proper duty, and most instructive part, of criticism. Omit, or pass slightly over, the expression, grace, and grouping of Raphael's *figures;* but ridicule in *detail* the knitting-needles and broom-twigs, that are to represent trees in his back grounds; and never let him hear the last of his *galli-pots!* Admit, that the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton are not *without merit;* but repay yourself for this concession, by reprinting at length the *two poems on the University Carrier!* As a fair specimen of his sonnets, quote "*a book was writ of late called Tetrachordon;*" and as characteristic of his rhythm and metre, cite his literal translation of the first and second psalm! In order to justify yourself, you need only assert, that had you dwelt chiefly on the beauties and excellences of the poet, the admiration of these might seduce the attention of future writers from the objects of their love and wonder, to an imitation of the few poems and passages in which the poet was most unlike himself,

But till reviews are conducted on far other principles, and with far other motives; till, in the place of arbitrary dictation and petulant sneers, the reviewers support their decisions by reference to fixed canons of criticism, previously established and deduced from the nature of man, reflecting minds will pronounce it arrogance in them thus to announce themselves, to men of letters, as the guides of their taste and judgment. To the purchaser and mere reader, it is, at all events, an injustice. He who tells me that there are

defects in a new work, tells me nothing which I should not have taken for granted without his information. But he who points out and elucidates the *beauties* of an original work, does indeed give me interesting information, such as experience would not have authorized me in anticipating. And as to compositions which the authors themselves announce with "Hæc ipsi novimus esse nihil," why should we judge by a different rule two printed works, only because the one author was alive, and the other in his grave? What literary man has not regretted the prudery of Spratt in refusing to let his friend Cowley appear in his slippers and dressing gown? I am not perhaps the only one who has derived an innocent amusement from the riddles, conundrums, tri-syllable lines, &c. &c. of Swift and his correspondents, in hours of languor, when, to have read his more finished works would have been useless to myself, and, in some sort, an act of injustice to the author. But I am at a loss to conceive by what perversity of judgment these relaxations of his genius could be employed to diminish his fame as the writer of "Gulliver's Travels," and the "Tale of the Tub." Had Mr. Southey written twice as many poems of inferior merit, or partial interest, as have enlivened the journals of the day, they would have added to his honour with good and wise men, not merely, or principally, as proving the versatility of his talents, but as evidences of the purity of that mind which, even in its levities, never wrote a line which it need regret on any moral account.

I have in imagination, transferred to the future biographer the duty of contrasting Southey's fixed and well earned fame, with the abuse and indefatigable hostility of his anonymous critics from his early youth to his ripest manhood. But I cannot think so ill of human nature as not to believe, that these critics have already taken shame to themselves, whether they consider the object of their abuse in his moral or his literary character. For reflect but on the variety and extent of his acquirements! He stands second to no man, either as an historian or as a bibliographer; and when I regard him as a popular essayist, (for the articles of his compositions in the reviews are, for the greater part, essays on subjects of deep or curious interest, rather than criticisms on particular works,*) I look in vain for any writer, who has conveyed so much information,

* See the articles on Methodism, in the Quarterly Review; the small volume of the New System of Education, &c.

from so many and such recondite sources, with so many just and original reflections, in a style so lively and poignant, yet so uniformly classical and perspicuous; no one, in short, who has combined so much wisdom with so much wit; so much truth and knowledge with so much life and fancy. His prose is always intelligible and always entertaining. In poetry he has attempted almost every species of composition known before, and he has added new ones; and if we except the highest lyric, (in which how few, how very few even of the greatest minds have been fortunate,) he has attempted every species successfully; from the political song of the day, thrown off in the playful overflow of honest joy and patriotic exultation, to the wild ballad;* from epistolary ease and graceful narrative, to austere and impetuous moral declamation; from the pastoral claims and wild streaming lights of the "Thalaba," in which sentiment and imagery have given permanence even to the excitement of curiosity; and from the full blaze of the "Kehama," (a gallery of finished pictures in one splendid fancy piece, in which, notwithstanding the moral grandeur rises gradually above the brilliance of the colouring, and the boldness and novelty of the machinery,) to the more sober beauties of the "Madoc;" and, lastly, from the Madoc to his "Roderick," in which, retaining all his former excellences of a poet eminently inventive and picturesque, he has surpassed himself in language and metre, in the construction of the whole, and in the splendour of particular passages.

Here, then, shall I conclude? No! The characters of the deceased, like the encomia on tombstones, as they are described with religious tenderness, so are they read, with allowing sympathy, indeed, but yet with rational deduction. There are men who deserve a higher record; men with whose characters it is the interest of their contemporaries, no less than that of posterity, to be made acquainted; while it is yet possible for impartial censure, and even for quick-sighted envy, to cross-examine the tale without offence to the courtesies of humanity; and while the eulogist, detected in exaggeration or falsehood, must pay the full penalty of his baseness in the contempt which brands the convicted flatterer. Publicly has Mr. Southey been reviled by men, who (I would fain hope for the honour of human nature) hurled fire-brands against a figure

* See the incomparable "Return from Moscow," and the "Old Woman of Berkeley."

of their own imagination; publicly have his talents been depreciated, his principles denounced; as publicly do I, therefore, who have known him intimately, deem it my duty to leave recorded, that it is SOUTHEY's almost unexampled felicity to possess the best gifts of talent and genius free from all their characteristic defects. To those who remember the state of our public schools and universities some twenty years past, it will appear no ordinary praise in any man to have passed from innocence into virtue, not only free from all vicious habit, but unstained by one act of intemperance, or the degradations akin to intemperance. That scheme of head, heart, and habitual demeanour, which, in his early manhood and first controversial writings, Milton, claiming the privilege of self-defence, asserts of himself, and challenges his calumniators to disprove; this will his school-mates, his fellow collegians, and his maturer friends, with a confidence proportioned to the intimacy of their knowledge, bear witness to, as again realized in the life of Robert Southey. But still more striking to those who, by biography, or by their own experience, are familiar with the general habits of industry and perseverance in his pursuits; the worthiness and dignity of those pursuits; his generous submission to tasks of transitory interest, or such as *his* genius alone could make otherwise; and that, having thus more than satisfied the claims of affection or prudence, he should yet have made for himself time and power to achieve more, and in more various departments, than almost any other writer has done, though employed wholly on subjects of his own choice and ambition. But as Southey possesses, and is not possessed by, his genius, even so is he the master even of his virtues. The regular and methodical tenor of his daily labours, which would be deemed rare in the most mechanical pursuits, and might be envied by the mere man of business, loses all semblance of formality in the dignified simplicity of his manners, in the spring and healthful cheerfulness of his spirits. Always employed, his friends find him always at leisure. No less punctual in trifles, than steadfast in the performance of highest duties, he inflicts none of those small pains and discomforts which irregular men scatter about them, and which in the aggregate, so often become formidable obstacles both to happiness and utility: while, on the contrary, he bestows all the pleasures, and inspires all that ease of mind on those around him, or connected with him, which perfect consistency, and (if such a

word might be framed) absolute *reliability*, equally in small as in great concerns, cannot but inspire and bestow: when this, too, is softened without being weakened by kindness and gentleness. I know few men who so well deserve the character which an ancient attributes to Marcus Cato, namely, that he was likest virtue, inasmuch as he seemed to act aright, not in obedience to any law or outward motive, but by the necessity of a happy nature, which could not act otherwise. As son, brother, husband, father, master, friend, he moves with firm, yet light steps, alike unostentatious, and alike exemplary. As a writer, he has uniformly made his talents subservient to the best interests of humanity, of public virtue, and domestic piety; his cause has ever been the cause of pure religion and of liberty, of national independence, and of national illumination. When future critics shall weigh out his guerdon of praise and censure, it will be Southey the poet only, that will supply them with the scanty materials for the latter. They will likewise not fail to record, that as no man was ever a more constant friend, never had poet more friends and honourers among the good of all parties; and that quacks in education, quacks in politics, and quacks in criticism, were his only enemies.*

* It is not easy to estimate the effects which the example of a young man, as highly distinguished for strict purity of disposition and conduct as for intellectual power and literary acquirements, may produce on those of the same age with himself, especially on those of similar pursuits and congenial minds. For many years, my opportunities of intercourse with Mr. Southey have been rare, and at long intervals; but I dwell with unabated pleasure on the strong and sudden, yet, I trust, not fleeting, influence, which my moral being underwent on my acquaintance with him at Oxford, whither I had gone at the commencement of our Cambridge vacation on a visit to an old school-fellow. Not, indeed, on my moral or religious principles, for *they* had never been contaminated; but in awakening the sense of the duty and dignity of making my actions accord with those principles both in word and deed. The irregularities only not universal among the young men of my standing, which I always *knew* to be *wrong*, I then learnt to feel as *degrading*; learnt to know that an opposite conduct, which was at that time considered by us as the easy virtue of cold and selfish prudence, might originate in the noblest emotions, in views the most disinterested and imaginative. It is not, however, from grateful recollections only, that I have been impelled thus to leave these, my deliberate sentiments, on record; but, in some sense, as a debt of justice to the man whose name has been so often connected with mine, for evil to which he is a stranger. As a specimen, I subjoin part of a note, from "the Beauties of the Anti-Jacobin," in which, having previously informed the public that I had been dishonored at Cambridge for preaching deism, at a time when, for my youthful ardor in defence of Christianity, I was decried as a bigot by the proselytes of the French Phi- (or to speak more truly, Psi-) losophy, the writer concludes with these words: "Since this time he has left his native country, commenced citizen of the world, *left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute. Ex his disce, his friends*, LAMB *and* SOUTHEY." With severest truth it may be asserted, that it would not be easy to select two men more exemplary in their domestic affections than those whose names were thus printed at full length as in the same rank of morals with a denounced infidel and fugitive, and who had left his children *fatherless, and his wife destitute!* Is it surprising, that many good men remained longer than, perhaps, they otherwise would have done, adverse to a party which encouraged and openly rewarded the authors of such atrocious calumnies? Qualis es, nescio; sed per quales agis, scio et doleo.

CHAPTER IV.

The Lyrical Ballads with the preface—Mr. Wordsworth's earlier poems—On fancy and imagination—The investigation of the distinction important to the fine arts.

I HAVE wandered far from the object in view, but as I fancied to myself readers who would respect the feelings that had tempted me from the main road, so I dare calculate on not a few who will warmly sympathise with them. At present it will be sufficient for my purpose, if I have proved, that Mr. Southey's writings, no more than my own, furnished the original occasion to this fiction of a *new school* of poetry, and of clamours against its supposed founders and proselytes.

As little do I believe that "Mr. WORDSWORTH'S Lyrical Ballads" were in *themselves* the cause. I speak exclusively of the two volumes so entitled. A careful and repeated examination of these, confirms me in the belief, that the omission of less than an hundred lines would have precluded nine tenths of the criticism on this work. I hazard this declaration, however, on the supposition, that the reader had taken it up, as he would have done any other collection of poems purporting to derive their subjects or interests from the incidents of domestic or ordinary life, intermingled with higher strains of meditation, which the poet utters in his own person and character; with the proviso, that they were perused without knowledge of, or reference to, the author's peculiar opinions, and that the reader had not had his attention previously directed to those peculiarities. In these, as was actually the case with Mr. Southey's earlier works, the lines and passages which might have offended the general taste, would have been considered as mere inequalities, and attributed to inattention, not to perversity of judgment. The men of business who had passed their lives chiefly in cities, and who might therefore be expected to derive the highest pleasure from acute notices of men and manners, conveyed in easy, yet correct and pointed language; and all those who, reading but little poetry, are most stimulated with that species of it which seems most distant from prose, would probably have passed by the volume altogether. Others more catholic in their taste, and yet habituated to be most pleased

when most excited, would have contented themselves with deciding, that the author had been successful in proportion to the elevation of his style and subject. Not a few, perhaps, might, by their admiration of "the lines written near Tintern Abbey," those "left upon a seat under a Yew Tree," the "old Cumberland beggar," and "Ruth," have been gradually led to peruse with kindred feeling the "Brothers," the "Hart leap well," and whatever other poems in that collection may be described as holding a middle place between those written in the highest and those in the humblest style; as, for instance, between the "Tintern Abbey," and "the Thorn," or the "Simon Lee." Should their taste submit to no further change, and still remain unreconciled to the colloquial phrases, or the imitations of them, that are, more or less, scattered through the class last mentioned; yet, even from the small number of the latter, they would have deemed them but an inconsiderable subtraction from the merit of the whole work; or, what is sometimes not unpleasing in the publication of a new writer, as serving to ascertain the natural tendency, and, consequently, the proper direction of the author's genius.

In the critical remarks, therefore, prefixed and annexed to the "Lyrical Ballads," I believe, that we may safely rest, as the true origin of the unexampled opposition which Mr. Wordsworth's writings have been since doomed to encounter. The humbler passages in the poems themselves, were dwelt on and cited to justify the rejection of the theory. What in and for themselves would have been either forgotten or forgiven as imperfections, or at least comparative failures, provoked direct hostility when announced as intentional, as the result of choice after full deliberation. Thus the poems, admitted by *all* as excellent, joined with those which had pleased the far *greater* number, though they formed two-thirds of the whole work, instead of being deemed (as in all right they should have been, even if we take for granted that the reader judged aright) an atonement for the few exceptions, gave wind and fuel to the animosity against both the poems and the poet. In all perplexity there is a portion of fear, which predisposes the mind to anger. Not able to deny that the author possessed both genius and a powerful intellect, they felt *very positive*, but were not *quite certain*, that he might not be in the right, and they themselves in the wrong; an unquiet state of mind, which seeks alleviation by quarrelling with the

occasion of it, and by wondering at the perverseness of the man who had written a long and argumentative essay to persuade them, that

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair;"

in other words, that they had been all their lives admiring without judgment, and were now about to censure without reason.*

That this conjecture is not wide from the mark, I am induced to believe from the noticeable fact, which I can state on my own knowledge, that the same general censure should have been grounded almost by each different person on some different poem. Among those, whose candour and judgment I estimate highly, I distinctly remember six who expressed their objections to the "Lyrical Ballads," almost in the same words, and altogether to the same purport, at the same time admitting, that several of the poems had given them great pleasure; and, strange as it might seem, the composition which one had cited as execrable, another had quoted as his favourite. I am indeed convinced, in my own mind, that could the same experiment have been tried with these volumes as was made in the well-known story of the picture, the result would have been the same; the parts which had been covered by the number of the

* In opinions of long continuance, and in which we had never before been molested by a single doubt, to be suddenly *convinced* of an *error*, is almost like being *convicted* of a fault. There is a state of mind, which is the direct antithesis of that which takes place when we *make a bull*. *The bull*, namely, consists in the bringing together two incompatible thoughts, with the *sensation*, but without the *sense* of their connexion. The psychological condition, or that which constitutes the possibility of this state, being such disproportionate vividness of two distant thoughts, as extinguishes or obscures the consciousness of the intermediate images or conceptions, or wholly abstracts the attention from them. Thus in the well known bull, "*I was a fine child, but they changed me;*" the first conception expressed in the word "*I*," is that of personal identity—*Ego contemplans*; the second expressed in the word "*me*," is the visual image or object by which the mind represents to itself its past condition, or rather, its personal identity under the form in which it imagined itself previously to have existed—Ego contemplatus. Now, the change of one visual image for another involves in itself no absurdity, and becomes absurd only by its immediate juxta-position with the first thought, which is rendered possible by the whole attention being successively absorbed in each singly, so as not to notice the interjacent notion, "changed," which, by its incongruity with the first thought, "*I*," constitutes the bull. Add only, that this process is facilitated by the circumstance of the words "*I*" and "*me*" being sometimes equivalent, and sometimes having a distinct meaning; sometimes, namely, signifying the act of self-consciousness, sometimes the external image in and by which the mind represents that act to itself, the result and symbol of its individuality. Now, suppose the direct contrary state, and you will have a distinct sense of the connection between two conceptions, without that *sensation* of such connexion which is supplied by habit. The man *feels*, as if he were standing on his head, though he cannot but *see*, that he is truly standing on his feet. This, as a painful sensation, will of course have a tendency to associate itself with the person who occasions it; even as persons, who have been by painful means restored from derangement, are known to feel an involuntary dislike towards their physician.

black spots on the one day, would be found equally *albo* lapide notatæ on the succeeding.

However this may be, it is assuredly hard and unjust to fix the attention on a few separate and insulated poems, with as much aversion as if they had been so many plague-spots on the whole work, instead of passing them over in silence, as so much blank paper, or leaves of bookseller's catalogue; especially, as no one pretends to have found immorality or indelicacy; and the poems, therefore, at the worst, could only be regarded as so many light or inferior coins in a roleau of gold, not as so much alloy in a weight of bullion. A friend whose *talents* I hold in the highest respect, but whose *judgment* and strong sound sense I have had almost continued occasion to *revere*, making the usual complaints to me concerning both the style and subjects of Mr. Wordsworth's minor poems; I admitted that there were some few tales and incidents, in which I could not myself find a sufficient cause for their having been recorded in metre. I mentioned "Alice Fell" as an instance; "nay," replied my friend, with more than usual quickness of manner, "I cannot agree with you *there!* that I own *does* seem to me a remarkably pleasing poem." In the "Lyrical Ballads," (for my experience does not enable me to extend the remark equally unqualified to the two subsequent volumes) I have heard, at different times, and from different individuals, every single poem *extolled* and *reprobated*, with the exception of those of loftier kind, which, as was before observed, seem to have won universal praise. This fact of itself would have made me diffident in my censures, had not a still stronger ground been furnished by the strange contrast of the heat and long continuance of the opposition, with the nature of the faults stated as justifying it. The seductive faults, the dulcia vitia of Cowley, Marini, or Darwin, might reasonably be thought capable of corrupting the public judgment for half a century, and require a twenty years' war, campaign after campaign, in order to dethrone the usurper, and re-establish the legitimate taste. But that a downright simpleness, under the affectation of simplicity, prosaic words in feeble metre, silly thoughts in childish phrases, and a preference of mean, degrading, or, at best, trivial associations and characters, should succeed in forming a school of imitators, a company of almost *religious* admirers, and this among young men of ardent minds, liberal education, and not

"With academic laurels unbestowed;"

and that this bare and bald *counterfeit* of poetry, which is characterised as *below* criticism, should, for nearly twenty years, have well nigh *engrossed* criticism as the main, if not the only, *butt* of review, magazine, pamphlets, poem, and paragraph;—this is, indeed, matter of wonder! Of yet greater is it, that the contest should still continue as * undecided as that between Bacchus and the frogs in Aristophanes; when the former descended to the realms of the departed to bring back the spirit of old and genuine poesy.

Χορος Βατραχων; Διονυσος.

Χ. βρεκεκεκὲξ, κοὰξ, κοάξ.

Δ. ἀλλ' ἐξολοιςθ' αὐτῶ κοάξ.
οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔς' ἄλλ' ἢ κοάξ.
ὀλιμώξετ'· οὐ γάρ μοι μέλει.

Χ. ἀλλὰ μὴν κεκραξόμεςθά
γ', ὁπόςον ἡ φαρυγξ ἂν ἧῶν
χανδανῃ δι' ἡμέδας,
βρεκεκεκὲξ, κοὰξ, κοάξ.

Δ. τούτω γὰρ οὐ νικήςετε.

Χ. οὐδὲ μὴν ἡμᾶς γ' ὑπάντως.

Δ. οὐδὲ μὴν ὑμεῖς γε δήμ'
οὐδέποτε. κεκδάξομαι γὰρ,
κἂν με δέῃ, δι' ἡμέρας,
ἕως ἂν ὑμῶν ὑπικρατήςω τοῦ κοαξ.

Χ. βρεκεκεκὲξ, ΚΟΑΞ, ΚΟΑΞ!

* Without, however, the apprehensions attributed to the *Pagan* reformer of the poetic republic. If we may judge from the preface to the recent collection of his poems, Mr. W. would have answered with Xanthias—

Συ δ' εκ εδεισας τον ϕοφον των 'ρημασων,
Και τας απειλας; ΞΑΝ. ϰμα Δι', εδ' εφροντιςα.

And here let me dare hint to the authors of the numerous parodies and pretended imitations of Mr. Wordsworth's style, that, at once to convey wit and wisdom in the semblance of folly and dulness, as is done in the clowns and fools, nay, even in the Dogberry, of our Shakspeare, is, doubtless, a proof of genius; or, at all events, of satiric talent; but that the attempt to ridicule a silly and childish poem, by writing another still sillier and still more childish, can only prove, (if it prove any thing at all,) that the parodist is a still greater blockhead than the original writer, and, what is far worse, a *malignant* coxcomb to boot. The talent for mimcry seems strongest where the human race are most degraded. The poor, naked,

During the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publications, entitled "Descriptive Sketches;" and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is an harshness and an acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating. The language was not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted, as by its own impatient strength; while the novelty and struggling crowd of images, acting in conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demanded always a greater closeness of attention than poetry, (at all events, than descriptive poetry,) has a right to claim. It not seldom, therefore, justified the complaint of obscurity. In the following extract I have sometimes fancied that I saw an emblem of the poem itself, and of the author's genius as it was then displayed.

"'Tis storm; and hid in mist from hour to hour,
All day the floods a deepening murmur pour;
The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight;
Dark is the region as with coming night;
And yet what frequent bursts of overpowering light;
Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,
Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form;
Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;
Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,
At once to pillars turn'd that flame with gold;
Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun
The West, that burns like one dilated sun,
Where in a mighty crucible expire
The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire."

The poetic PSYCHE, in its process to full development, undergoes as many changes as its Greek name-sake, the butterfly.* And it

half human savages of New Holland, were found excellent mimics; and in civilized society, minds of the very lowest stamp alone satirize by *copying*. At least the difference, which must blend with, and balance the likeness, in order to constitute a just imitation, existing here merely in caricature, detracts from the libeller's heart, without adding an iota to the credit of his understanding.

* The fact that in Greek, Psyche is the common name for the soul, and the butterfly, is thus alluded to in the following stanza from an unpublished poem of the author:

is remarkable how soon genius clears and purifies itself from the faults and errors of its earliest products; faults which, in its earliest compositions, are the more obtrusive and confluent; because, as heterogeneous elements which had only a temporary use, they constitute the very *ferment* by which themselves are carried off. Or we may compare them to some diseases, which must work on the humours, and be thrown out on the surface, in order to secure the patient from their future recurrence. I was in my twenty-fourth year when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally, and while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind, by his recitation of a manuscript poem, which still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza, and tone of style, were the same as those of the "Female Vagrant," as originally printed in the first volume of the "Lyrical Ballads." There was here no mark of strained thought or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery; and as the poet hath himself well described in his lines "on revisiting the Wye," manly reflection, and human associations, had given both variety and an additional interest to natural objects, which, in the passion and appetite of the first love, they had seemed to him neither to need or permit. The occasional obscurities which had risen from an imperfect controul over the resources of his native language, had almost wholly disappeared, together with that worse defect of arbitrary and illogical phrases, at once hackneyed and fantastic, which holds so distinguished a place in the *technique* of ordinary poetry, and will, more or less, alloy the earlier poems of the truest genius, unless the attention has been specifically directed to their worthlessness and incongruity.* I

> "The butterfly the ancient Grecians made
> The soul's fair emblem, and its only name—
> But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade
> Of mortal life! For in this earthly frame
> Our's is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,
> Manifold motions making little speed,
> And to deform and kill the things whereon we feed." S. T. C.

* Mr. Wordsworth, even in his two earliest, "the Evening Walk," and "the Descriptive Sketches," is more free from this latter defect than most of the young poets, his contemporaries. It may, however, be exemplified—together with the harsh and obscure construction, in which he more often offended—in the following lines:

> "'Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,
> Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry;

did not perceive any thing particular in the mere style of the poem alluded to during its recitation, except, indeed, such difference as was not separable from the thought and manner; and the Spencerian stanza, which always, more or less, recalls to the reader's mind Spencer's own style, would doubtless have authorized, in my then opinion, a more frequent descent to the phrases of ordinary life than could, without an ill effect, have been hazarded in the heroic couplet. It was not, however, the freedom from false taste, whether as to common defects, or to those more properly his own, which made so unusual an impression on my feelings immediately, and subsequently on my judgment. It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed; and, above all, the original gift of spreading the tone, the *atmosphere*, and, with it, the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops. "To find no contradiction in the union of old and new; to contemplate the ANCIENT of days and all his works with feelings as fresh as if all had then sprang forth at the first creative fiat; characterizes the mind that feels the riddle of the world, and may help to unravel it. To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances which every day, for, perhaps, forty years, had rendered familiar;

> "With sun and moon and stars throughout the year,
> And man and woman;"

this is the character and privilege of genius, and one of the marks which distinguish genius from talents. And therefore, it is the prime merit of genius, and its most unequivocal mode of manifestation,

> Where hardly given the hopeless waste to cheer,
> Denied the bread of life the foodful ear,
> Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,
> And *apple sickens* pale in summer's ray;
> *E'en here content has fixed her smiling reign*
> *With independence, child of high disdain.*"

I hope I need not say, that I have quoted these lines for no other purpose than to make my meaning fully understood. It is to be regretted that Mr. Wordsworth has not re-published these two poems entire.

so to represent familiar objects as to awaken in the minds of others a kindred feeling concerning them, and that freshness of sensation which is the constant accompaniment of mental, no less than of bodily convalescence. Who has not a thousand times seen snow fall on water? Who has not watched it with a new feeling from the time that he has read Burns' comparison of sensual pleasure,

> "To snow that falls upon a river,
> A moment white—then gone forever!"

"In poems, equally as in philosophic disquisitions, genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Truths, of all others the most awful and mysterious, yet being, at the same time, of universal interest, are too often considered as *so* true, that they lose all the life and efficiency of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors." THE FRIEND,* page 76. No. 5.

This excellence, which, in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings, is more or less predominant, and which constitutes the character of his mind, I no sooner felt than I sought to understand. Repeated meditations led me first to suspect, (and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions and effects, matured my conjecture into full conviction,) that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power. It is not, I own, easy to conceive a more opposite translation of the Greek *phantasia* than the Latin imaginatio: but it is equally true, that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense, working progressively to desynonymise † those words, originally of the same meaning, which the

* As "The Friend" was printed on stampt sheets, and sent only by the post, to a very limited number of subscribers, the author has felt less objection to quote from it, though a work of his own. To the public at large, indeed, it is the same as a volume in manuscript.

† This is effected either by giving to the one word a general, and to the other an exclusive use; as, "to put on the back," and "to endorse;" or, by an actual distinction of meanings, as "naturalist," and "physician;" or, by difference of relation, as "I," and "me;" (each of which the rustics of our different provinces still use in all the cases singular of the first personal pronoun.) Even the mere difference, or corruption, in the *pronunciation* of the same word, if it have become

conflux of dialects had supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German: and which the same cause, joined with accidents of translation from original works of different countries, occasion in mixed languages like our own. The first and most important point to be proved, is, that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word, and, (this done,) to appropriate that word exclusively to one meaning, and the synonyme, (should there be one,) to the other. But if (as will be often the case in the arts and sciences,) no synonyme exists, we must either invent or borrow a word. In the present instance, the appropriation had already begun, and been legitimated in the derivative adjective: Milton had a highly *imaginative*, Cowley a very *fanciful* mind. If, therefore, I should succeed in establishing the actual existences of two faculties generally different, the nomenclature would be at once determined. To the faculty by which I had characterized Milton, we should confine the term *imagination*; while the other would be contra-distinguished as *fancy*. Now, were it once fully ascertained, that this division is no less grounded in nature than that of delirium from mania, or Otway's

"Lutes, lobsters, seas of milk, and ships of amber,"

from Shakspeare's

"What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?

or from the preceding apostrophe to the elements; the theory of the fine arts, and of poetry in particular, could not, I thought, but derive some additional and important light. It would, in its immediate effects, furnish a torch of guidance to the philosophical critic; and, ultimately, to the poet himself. In energetic minds, truth soon

general, will produce a new word with a distinct signification; thus, "property," and "propriety," the latter of which, even to the time of Charles II. was the *written* word for all the senses of both. Thus, too, "mister," and "master," both hasty pronunciations of the same word; "magister," "mistress," and "miss," "if," and "give," &c. &c. There is a sort of *minim immortal* among the animalcula infusoria, which has not, naturally, either birth or death, absolute beginning or absolute end; for, at a certain period, a small point appears on its back, which deepens and lengthens till the creature divides into two, and the same process recommences in each of the halves now become integral. This may be a fanciful, but it is by no means a bad emblem of the formation of words, and may facilitate the conception, how immense a nomenclature may be organized from a few simple sounds by rational beings in a social state. For each new application or excitement of the same sound will call forth a different sensation, which cannot but affect the pronunciation. The after recollection of the sound, without the same vivid sensation, will modify it still further; till, at length, all trace of the original likeness is worn away.

changes, by domestication, into power; and from directing in the discrimination and appraisal of the product, becomes influencive in the production. To admire on principle, is the only way to imitate without loss of originality.

It has been already hinted, that metaphysics and psychology have long been my hobby-horse. But to have a hobby-horse, and be vain of it, are so commonly found together, that they pass almost for the same. I trust, therefore, that there will be more good humour than contempt, in the smile with which the reader chastises my self-complacency, if I confess myself uncertain, whether the satisfaction from the perception of a truth new to myself, may not have been rendered more poignant, by the conceit that it would be equally so to the public. There was a time, certainly, in which I took some little credit to myself, in the belief that I had been the first of my countrymen who had pointed out the diverse meaning of which the two terms were capable, and analyzed the faculties to which they should be appropriated. Mr. W. Taylor's recent volumes of synonymes, I have not yet seen;* but his specification of the terms in question, has been clearly shown to be both insufficient and erroneous by Mr. Wordsworth, in the preface added to

* I ought to have added, with the exception of a single sheet which I accidentally met with at the printer's. Even from this scanty specimen, I found it impossible to doubt the talent, or not to admire the ingenuity of the author. That his distinctions were, for the greater part, unsatisfactory to *my* mind, proves nothing against their accuracy; but it may possibly be serviceable to him in case of a second edition, if I take this opportunity of suggesting the query, whether he may not have been occasionally misled, by having assumed, as to me he appeared to have done, the non-existence of *any* absolute synonymes in our language? Now, I cannot but think, that there are many which remain for our posterity to distinguish and appropriate, and which I regard as so much reversionary wealth in our mother tongue. When two distinct meanings are confounded under one or more words, (and such must be the case, as sure as our knowledge is progressive, and, of course, imperfect) erroneous consequences will be drawn, and what is true in one sense of the word, will be affirmed as true in toto. Men of research, startled by the consequences, seek in the things themselves (whether in or out of the mind) for a knowledge of the fact, and having discovered the difference, remove the equivocation either by the substitution of a new word, or by the appropriation of one of the two or more words, that had before been used promiscuously. When this distinction has been so naturalized and of such general currency that the language itself does, as it were, *think* for us, (like the sliding rule which is the mechanic's safe substitute for arithmetical knowledge,) we then say, that it is evident to *common sense*. Common sense, therefore, differs in different ages. What was born and christened in the schools, passess by degrees into the world at large, and becomes the property of the market and the tea-table. At least, I can discover no other meaning of the term *common sense*, if it is to convey any specific difference from sense and judgment in genere, and where it is not used scholastically for the *universal reason*. Thus, in the reign of Charles II., the philosophic world was called to arms by the moral sophisms of Hobbs, and the ablest writers exerted themselves in the detection of an error which a school-boy would now be able to confute by the mere recollection, that *compulsion* and *obligation* conveyed two ideas perfectly disparate, and that what appertained to the one had been falsely transferred to the other, by a mere confusion of terms.

the late collection of his "Lyrical Ballads and other poems." The explanation which Mr. Wordsworth has himself given, will be found to differ from mine, chiefly, perhaps, as our objects are different. It could scarcely, indeed, happen otherwise, from the advantage I have enjoyed of frequent conversation with him on a subject to which a poem of his own first directed my attention, and my conclusions concerning which, he had made more lucid to myself by many happy instances drawn from the operation of natural objects on the mind. But it was Mr. Wordsworth's purpose to consider the influences of fancy and imagination as they are manifested in poetry, and, from the different effects, to conclude their diversity in kind; while it is my object to investigate the seminal principle, and then, from the kind, to deduce the degree. My friend has drawn a masterly sketch of the branches, with their *poetic* fruitage. I wish to add the trunk, and even the roots, as far as they lift themselves above ground, and are visible to the naked eye of our common consciousness.

Yet, even in this attempt, I am aware that I shall be obliged to draw more largely on the reader's attention, than so immethodical a miscellany can authorize; when in such a work (*the Ecclesiastical Policy*) of such a mind as Hooker's, the judicious author, though no less admirable for the perspicuity than for the port and dignity of his language; and though he wrote for men of learning in a learned age, saw, nevertheless, occasion to anticipate and guard against "complaints of obscurity," as often as he was to trace his subject "to the highest well-spring and fountain." Which, (continues he,) "because men are not accustomed to, the pains we take are more needful, a great deal, than acceptable; and the matters we handle seem, by reason of newness, (till the mind grow better acquainted with them,) dark and intricate." I would gladly, therefore, spare both myself and others this labour, if I knew how without it to present an intelligible statement of my poetic creed; not as my *opinions*, which weigh for nothing, but as deductions from established premises, conveyed in such a form as is calculated either to effect a fundamental conviction, or to receive a fundamental confutation. If I may dare once more adopt the words of Hooker, "they, unto whom we shall seem tedious, are in no wise injured by us, because it is in their own hands to spare that labour, which they are not willing to endure." Those at least, let me be

permitted to add, who have taken so much pains to render me ridiculous for a perversion of taste, and have supported the charge by attributing strange notions to me on no other authority than their own conjectures, owe it to themselves, as well as to me, not to refuse their attention to my own statement of the theory, which I *do* acknowledge; or shrink from the trouble of examining the grounds on which I rest it, or the arguments which I offer in its justification.

CHAPTER V.

On the law of association—Its history traced from Aristotle to Hartley.

THERE have been men in all ages, who have been impelled, as by an instinct, to propose their own nature as a problem, and who devote their attempts to its solution. The first step was to construct a table of distinctions, which they seem to have formed on the principle of the absence or presence of the WILL. Our various sensations, perceptions and movements, were classed as active or passive, or as media partaking of both. A still finer distinction was soon established between the voluntary and the spontaneous. In our perceptions we seem to ourselves merely passive to an external power, whether as a mirror reflecting the landscape, or as a blank canvas on which some unknown hand paints it. For it is worthy of notice, that the latter, or the system of idealism, may be traced to sources equally remote with the former, or materialism; and Berkeley can boast an ancestry at least as venerable as Gassendi or Hobbs. These conjectures, however, concerning the mode in which our perceptions originated, could not alter the natural difference in *things* and *thoughts*. In the former, the cause appeared wholly external; while in the latter, sometimes our will interfered as the producing or determining cause, and sometimes our nature seemed to act by a mechanism of its own, without any conscious effort of the will, or even against it. Our inward experiences were thus arranged in three separate classes, the passive sense, or what the school-men call the merely receptive quality of the mind; the voluntary; and the spontaneous, which holds the middle place between both. But it is not in human nature to meditate on any mode of action, without inquiring after the law that governs it; and in the explanation of the spontaneous movements of our being, the metaphysician took the lead of the anatomist and natural philosopher. In Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and India, the analysis of the mind had reached its noon and manhood, while experimental research was still in its dawn and infancy. For many, very many centuries, it has been difficult to advance a new truth, or even a new error, in the philosophy of the intellect or morals.

With regard, however, to the laws that direct the spontaneous movements of thought, and the principle of their intellectual mechanism, there exists, it has been asserted, an important exception, most honourable to the moderns, and in the merit of which our own country claims the largest share. Sir James Mackintosh (who, amid the variety of his talents and attainments, is not of less repute for the depth and accuracy of his philosophical inquiries, than for the eloquence with which he is said to render their most difficult results perspicuous, and the driest attractive,) affirmed, in the lectures delivered by him at Lincoln's Inn Hall, that the law of association, as established in the contemporaneity of the original impressions, formed the basis of all true psychology; and any ontological or metaphysical science, not contained in such (i. e. empirical) psychology, was but a web of abstractions and generalizations. Of this prolific truth, of this great fundamental law, he declared Hobbs to have been the original *discoverer*, while its full application to the whole intellectual system we owe to David Hartley; who stood in the same relation to Hobbs, as Newton to Kepler; the law of association being that to the mind, which gravitation is to matter.

Of the former clause in this assertion, as it respects the comparative merits of the ancient metaphysicians, including their commentators, the school men, and of the modern French and British philosophers, from Hobbs to Hume, Hartley and Condillac, this is not the place to speak. So wide indeed is the chasm between this gentleman's philosophical creed and mine, that so far from being able to join hands, we could scarce make our voices intelligible to each other: and to *bridge* it over, would require more time, skill and power, than I believe myself to possess. But the latter clause involves for the greater part a mere question of fact and history, and the accuracy of the statement is to be tried by documents rather than reasoning.

First, then, I deny Hobbs's claim in toto: for he had been anticipated by Des Cartes, whose work "De Methodo" preceded Hobbs's "De Natura Humana," by more than a year. But what is of much more importance, Hobbs builds nothing on the principle which he had announced. He does not even announce it, as differing in any respect from the general laws of material motion and impact: nor was it, indeed, possible for him so to do, compatibly

with his system, which was exclusively material and mechanical. Far otherwise is it with Des Cartes; greatly as he too, in his after writings, (and still more egregiously his followers, De la Forge, and others,) obscured the truth by their attempts to explain it on the theory of nervous fluids and material configurations. But in his interesting work "De Methodo," Des Cartes relates the circumstance which first led him to meditate on this subject, and which since then has been often noticed and employed as an instance and illustration of the law. A child who, with its eyes bandaged, had lost several of his fingers by amputation, continued to complain for many days successively of pains, now in his joint, and now in that of the very fingers which had been cut off. Des Cartes was led by this incident to reflect on the uncertainty with which we attribute any particular place to any inward pain or uneasiness, and proceeded, after long consideration, to establish it as a general law, that contemporaneous impressions, whether images or sensations, recal each other mechanically. On this principle, as a ground work, he built up the whole system of human language, as one continued process of association. He showed in what sense not only general terms, but generic images, (under the name of abstract ideas,) actually existed, and in what consists their nature and power. As one word may become the general exponent of many, so, by association, a simple image may represent a whole class. But in truth, Hobbs himself makes no claims to any discovery, and introduces this law of association, or, (in his own language,) discursus mentalis, as an admitted fact, in the *solution* alone of which it is, by causes purely physiological, he arrogates any originality. His system is briefly this: whenever the senses are impinged on by external objects, whether by the rays of light reflected from them, or by effluxes of their finer particles, there results a correspondent motion of the innermost and subtlest organs. This motion constitutes a *representation*, and there remains an *impression* of the same, or a certain disposition to repeat the same motion. Whenever we feel several objects at the same time, the *impressions* that are left (or, in the language of Mr. Hume, the *ideas*) are linked together. Whenever, therefore, any one of the movements which constitute a complex impression, are renewed through the senses, the others succeed mechanically. It follows of necessity, therefore, that Hobbs, as well as Hartley, and all others who derive as-

sociation from the connexion and interdependence of the supposed matter, the movements of which constitute our thoughts, *must* have reduced all its forms to the one law of time. But even the merit of announcing this law with philosophic precision cannot be fairly conceded to him. For the objects of any two ideas * need not have co-existed in the same sensation in order to become mutually associable. The same result will follow, when one only of the two ideas has been represented by the senses, and the other by the memory.

Long, however, before either Hobbs or Des Cartes, the law of association had been defined, and its important functions set forth by Melanchthon, Ammerbach, and Ludovicus Vives; more especially by the last. Phantasia, it is to be noticed, is employed by Vives to express the mental power of comprehension, or the *active* function of the mind; and imaginatio for the receptivity (vis receptiva) of impressions, or for the *passive* perception. The power of combination he appropriates to the former:—"quæ singula et simpliciter acceperat imaginatio, ea conjungit et disgungit phantasia." And the law by which the thoughts are spontaneously pre-

*I here use the word "idea" in Mr. Hume's sense, on account of its general currency among the English metaphysicians, though against my own judgment; for I believe that the vague use of this word has been the cause of much error and more confusion. The word Ἰδεα, in its original sense, as used by Pindar, Aristophanes, and in the gospel of Matthew, represented the visual abstraction of a distant object, when we see the whole without distinguishing its parts. Plato adopted it as a technical term, and as the antithesis to Εἰδωλα, or sensuous images; the transient and perishable emblems, or mental words, of ideas. The ideas themselves he considered as mysterious powers, living, seminal, formative, and exempt from time. In this sense the word became the property of the Platonic school; and it seldom occurs in Aristotle, without some such phrase annexed to it, as according to Plato, or as Plato says. Our English writers to the end of Charles 2nd's reign, or somewhat later, employed it either in the original sense, or Platonically, or in a sense nearly correspondent to our present use of the substantive, Ideal, always, however, opposing it, more or less, to image, whether of present or absent objects. The reader will not be displeased with the following interesting exemplification from bishop Jeremy Taylor: "St. Lewis the king sent Ivo bishop of Chartres on an embassy, and he told, that he met a grave and stately matron on the way, with a censer of fire in one hand, and a vessel of water in the other; and observing her to have a melancholy, religious, and phantastic deportment and look, he asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water; she answered, my purpose is with the fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God purely for the love of God. But we rarely meet with such spirits, which love virtue so metaphysically as *to abstract her from all sensible compositions, and love the purity of the idea.*" Des Cartes having introduced into his philosophy the fanciful hypothesis of *material ideas*, or certain configurations of the brain, which were as so many moulds to the influxes of the external world; Mr. Locke adopted the term, but extended its signification to whatever is the immediate object of the mind's attention or consciousness. Mr. Hume, distinguishing those representations which are accompanied with a sense of a present object, from those reproduced by the mind itself, designated the former by *impressions*, and confined the word *idea* to the latter.

sented follows thus:—"quæ simul sunt a phantasa comprehensa si alterutrum occurrat, solet secum alterum representare." To time, therefore, he subordinates all the other exciting causes of association. The soul proceeds "a causa ad affectum, ab hoc ad instrumentum, a parte ad totum;" thence to the place, from place to person, and from this to whatever preceded or followed, all as being parts of a total impression, each of which may recal the other. The apparent springs "Saltus vel transitus etiam longisimos," he explains by the same thought having been a component part of two or more total impressions. Thus "ex Scipione venio incogitationem potentiæ Turcicæ proper victorias ejus in ea parte Asiæ in qua regnabat Antiochus."

But from Vives I pass at once to the source of his doctrines, and (as far as we can judge from the remains yet extant of Greek philosophy) as to the first, so to the fullest and most perfect enunciation of the associative principle, viz: to the writings of Aristotle; and of these principally to the books "De Anima," "De Memoria," and that which is entitled in the old translations "Parva Naturalia." In as much as later writers have either deviated from, or added to his doctrines, they appear to me to have introduced either error or groundless supposition.

In the first place, it is to be observed, that Aristotle's positions on this subject are unmixed with fiction. The wise Stagyrite speaks of no successive particles propagating motion like billiard balls, (as Hobbs;) nor of nervous or animal spirits, where inanimate and irrational solids are thawed down, and distilled, or filtrated by ascension, into living and intelligent fluids, that etch and re-etch engravings on the brain, (as the followers of Des Cartes, and the humoral pathologists in general;) nor of an oscillating ether which was to effect the same service for the nerves of the brain considered as solid fibres, as the animal spirits perform for them under the notion of hollow tubes, (as *Hartley* teaches)—nor finally, (with yet more recent dreamers,) of chemical compositions by elective affinity, or of an electric light at once the immediate object and the ultimate organ of inward vision, which rises to the brain like an Aurora Borealis, and there disporting in various shapes, (as the balance of plus and minus, or negative and positive, is destroyed or re-established,) images out both past and present. Aristotle delivers a just *theory*, without pretending to an *hypothesis*; or in other words,

a comprehensive survey of the different facts, and of their relations to each other, without *supposition*, i. e. a fact *placed under* a number of facts, as their common support and explanation; though in the majority of instances, these hypotheses or suppositions better deserve the name of Υποτησεις, or *suffictions*. He uses, indeed, the word Κινησις, to express what we call representations or ideas, but he carefully distinguishes them from material motion, designating the latter always by annexing the words Εν τοπω, or κατα τοπον. On the contrary, in his treatise "De Anima," he excludes place and motion from all the operations of thought, whether representations or volitions, as attributes utterly and absurdly heterogeneous.

The *general law* of association, or more accurately the *common condition* under which all exciting causes act, and in which they may be generalized, according to Aristotle, is this: Ideas, by having been together, acquire a power of recalling each other; or every partial representation awakes the total representation of which it had been a part. In the practical determination of this common principle to particular recollections, he admits five agents or occasioning causes: 1st, connection in time, whether simultaneous, preceding or successive; 2d, vicinity or connection in space; 3d, interdependence or necessary connection, as cause and effect; 4th, likeness; and 5th, contrast. As an additional solution of the occasional seeming chasms in the continuity of reproduction, he proves that movements or ideas possessing one or the other of these five characters had passed through the mind as intermediate links, sufficiently clear to recal other parts of the same total impressions with which they had co-existed, though not vivid enough to excite that degree of attention which is requisite for distinct recollection, or as we may aptly express it, *after-consciousness*. In association, then, consists the whole mechanism of the reproduction of impressions, in the Aristotelian Psychology. It is the universal law of the *passive* fancy and *mechanical* memory; that which supplies to all other faculties their objects, to all thought the elements of its materials.

In consulting the excellent commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas on the Parva Naturalia of Aristotle, I was struck at once with its close resemblance to Hume's essay on association. The main thoughts were the same in both, the *order* of the thoughts was the

same, and even the illustrations differed only by Hume's occasional substitution of more modern examples. I mentioned the circumstance to several of my literary acquaintances, who admitted the closeness of the resemblance, and that it seemed too great to be explained by mere coincidence; but they thought it improbable that Hume should have held the pages of the angelic Doctor worth turning over. But some time after, Mr. Payne, of the King's mews, showed Sir James Mackintosh some odd volumes of St. Thomas Aquinas, partly perhaps from having heard that Sir James (then Mr.) Mackintosh had in his lectures past a high encomium on this canonized philosopher, but chiefly from the fact, that the volumes had belonged to Mr. Hume, and had here and there marginal marks and notes of reference in his own hand writing. Among these volumes was that which contains the *Parva Naturalia*, in the old latin version, swathed and swaddled in the commentary afore mentioned!

It remains, then, for me, first, to state wherein Hartley differs from Aristotle; then, to exhibit the grounds of my conviction, that he differed only to err; and next, as the result, to show, by what influences of the choice and judgment the associative power becomes either memory or fancy; and, in conclusion, to appropriate the remaining offices of the mind to the reason and the imagination. With my best efforts to be as perspicuous as the nature of language will permit on such a subject, I earnestly solicit the good wishes and friendly patience of my readers, while I thus go "sounding on my dim and perilous way."

CHAPTER VI.

That Hartley's system, as far as it differs from that of Aristotle, is neither tenable in theory, nor founded in facts.

Of Hartley's hypothetical vibrations in his hypothetical oscillating ether of the nerves, which is the first and most obvious distinction between his system and that of Aristotle, I shall say little. This, with all other similar attempts to render *that* an object of the sight which has no relation to sight, has been already sufficiently exposed by the younger Reimarus, Maasse, &c. as outraging the very axioms of mechanics, in a scheme, the merit of which consists in its being mechanical. Whether any other philosophy be possible, but the mechanical; and again, whether the mechanical system can have any claim to be called philosophy; are questions for another place. It is, however, certain, that as long as we deny the former, and affirm the latter, we must bewilder ourselves, whenever we would pierce into the *adyta* of causation; and all that laborious conjecture can do, is to fill up the gaps of fancy. Under that despotism of the eye, (the emancipation from which Pythagoras by his *numeral*, and Plato by his *musical*, symbols, and both by geometric discipline, aimed at, as the first προταιδευτι ον of the mind)—under this strong sensuous influence, we are restless, because invisible things are not the objects of vision; and metaphysical systems, for the most part, become popular, not for their truth, but in proportion as they attribute to causes a susceptibility of being *seen*, if only our visual organs were sufficiently powerful.

From a hundred possible confutations, let one suffice. According to this system, the idea or vibration *a* from the external object A becomes associable with the idea or vibration *m* from the external object M, because the oscillation *a* propagated itself so as to reproduce the oscillation *m*. But the original impression from M was essentially different from the impression A: unless, therefore, different causes may produce the same effect, the vibration *a* could never produce the vibration *m*; and this, therefore, could never be the means by which *a* and *m* are associated. To understand this, the attentive reader need only be reminded, that the ideas are them-

selves, in Hartley's system, nothing more than their appropriate configurative vibrations. It is a mere delusion of the fancy to conceive the pre-existence of the ideas, in any chain of association, as so many differently coloured billiard-balls in contact, so that when an object, the billiard-stick, strikes the first or white ball, the same motion propagates itself through the red, green, blue, black, &c. and sets the whole in motion. No! we must suppose the very same force, which *constitutes* the white ball, to *constitute* the red or black; or the idea of a circle to *constitute* the idea of a triangle; which is impossible.

But it may be said, that, by the sensations from the objects A and M, the nerves have acquired a disposition to the vibrations *a* and *m*, and therefore *a* need only be repeated in order to reproduce *m*. Now we will grant, for a moment, the possibility of such a disposition in a material nerve; which yet seems scarcely less absurd than to say, that a weather-cock had acquired a *habit* of turning to the east, from the wind having been so long in that quarter: for if it be replied, that we must take in the circumstance of *life*, what then becomes of the mechanical philosophy? And what is the *nerve*, but the flint which the wag placed in the pot as the first ingredient of his stone-broth, requiring only salt, turnips, and mutton, for the remainder? But if we waive this, and presuppose the actual existence of such a disposition, two cases are possible. Either, every idea has its own nerve and correspondent oscillation, or this is not the case. If the latter be the truth, we should gain nothing by these dispositions; for then, every nerve having several dispositions, when the motion of any other nerve is propagated into it, there will be no ground or cause present, why exactly the oscillation *m* should arise, rather than any other to which it was equally predisposed. But if we take the former, and let every idea have a nerve of its own, then every nerve must be capable of propagating its motion into many other nerves; and again, there is no reason assignable, why the vibration *m* should arise, rather than any other ad libitum.

It is fashionable to smile at Hartley's vibrations and vibratiuncles; and his work has been re-edited by Priestly, with the omission of the *material* hypothesis. But Hartley was too great a man, too coherent a thinker, for this to have been done either consistently or to any wise purpose. For all other parts of his system, as far as

they are peculiar to that system, once removed from their mechanical basis, not only lose their main support, but the very motive which led to their adoption. Thus the principle of *contemporaneity*, which Aristotle had made the common *condition* of all the laws of association, Hartley was constrained to represent as being itself the sole *law*. For to what law can the action of *material* atoms be subject, but that of proximity in *place*? And to what law can their *motion* be subjected, but that of *time*? Again, from this results inevitably, that the will, the reason, the judgment, and the understanding, instead of being the determining causes of association, must needs be represented as its *creatures*, and among its mechanical *effects*. Conceive, for instance, a broad stream, winding through a mountainous country, with an indefinite number of currents, varying and running into each other according as the gusts chance to blow from the opening of the mountains. The temporary union of several currents in one, so as to form the main current of the moment, would present an accurate image of Hartley's theory of the will.

Had this been really the case, the consequence would have been, that our whole life would be divided between the despotism of outward impressions, and that of senseless and passive memory. Take his law in its highest abstraction and most philosophical form, viz: that every partial representation recalls the total representation of which it was a part; and the law becomes nugatory, were it only from its universality. In practice it would, indeed, be mere lawlessness. Consider how immense must be the sphere of a total impression from the top of St. Paul's church; and how rapid and continuous the series of such total impressions. If, therefore, we suppose the absence of all interference of the will, reason, and judgment, one or other of two consequences must result. Either the ideas, (or relicts of such impressions,) will exactly imitate the order of the impression itself, which would be absolute *delirium*; or any one part of that impression might recall any other part, and, (as from the law of continuity there must exist, in every total impression, some one or more parts, which are components of some other following impression, and so on ad infinitum,) *any* part of *any* impression might recall *any* part of any *other*, without a cause present to determine *what* it should be. For to bring in the will, or reason, as causes of their own cause, that is, at once causes and effects,

can satisfy those only who, in their pretended evidences of a God, having, first, demanded organization as the sole cause and ground of intellect, will, then, coolly demand the pre-existence of intellect as the cause and ground-work of organization. There is, in truth, but one state to which this theory applies at all, namely, that of complete lightheadedness; and even to this it applies but partially, because the will and reason are, perhaps, never wholly suspended.

A case of this kind occurred in a Catholic town in Germany, a year or two before my arrival at Gottingen, and had not then ceased to be a frequent subject of conversation. A young woman of four or five and twenty, who could neither read nor write, was seized with a nervous fever; during which, according to the asseverations of all the priests and monks of the neighborhood, she became *possessed*, and, as it appeared, by a very learned devil. She continued incessantly talking Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in very pompous tones, and with most distinct enunciation. This possession was rendered more probable, by the known fact that she was, or had been, an heretic. Voltaire humourously advises the devil to decline all acquaintance with medical men; and it would have been more to his reputation if he had taken this advice in the present instance. The case had attracted the particular attention of a young physician, and, by his statement, many eminent physiologists and psychologists visited the town, and cross-examined the case on the spot. Sheets full of her ravings were taken down from her own mouth, and were found to consist of sentences coherent and intelligible each for itself, but with little or no connection with each other. Of the Hebrew, a small portion only could be traced to the Bible; the remainder seemed to be in the rabbinical dialect. All trick or conspiracy was out of the question. Not only had the young woman ever been an harmless, simple creature, but she was evidently labouring under a nervous fever. In the town in which she had been resident for many years, as a servant in different families, no solution presented itself. The young physician, however, determined to trace her past life step by step; for the patient herself was incapable of returning a rational answer. He, at length, succeeded in discovering the place where her parents had lived; travelled thither, found *them* dead, but an uncle surviving; and from him learnt, that the patient had been charitably taken by an old protestant pastor at nine years old, and had remained with him

some years, even till the old man's death. Of this pastor the uncle knew nothing, but that he was a very good man. With great difficulty, and after much search, our young medical philosopher discovered a niece of the pastor's, who had lived with him as his house-keeper, and had inherited his effects. She remembered the girl; related, that her venerable uncle had been too indulgent, and could not bear to hear the girl scolded; that she was willing to have kept her, but that, after her patron's death, the girl herself refused to stay. Anxious inquiries were then, of course, made concerning the pastor's habits, and the solution of the phenomenon was soon obtained. For it appeared, that it had been the old man's custom for years, to walk up and down a passage of his house, into which the kitchen door opened, and to read to himself, with a loud voice, out of his favorite books. A considerable number of these were still in the niece's possession. She added, that he was a very learned man, and a great Hebraist. Among the books were found a collection of rabbinical writings, together with several of the Greek and Latin fathers; and the physician succeeded in identifying so many passages with those taken down at the young woman's bedside, that no doubt could remain in any rational mind, concerning the true origin of the impressions made on her nervous system.

This authenticated case furnishes both proof and instance, that relicks of sensation may exist, for an indefinite time, in a latent state, in the very same order in which they were originally impressed; and, as we cannot rationally suppose the feverish state of the brain to act in any other way than as a stimulus, this fact, (and it would not be difficult to adduce several of the same kind,) contributes to make it even probable, that all thoughts are, in themselves, imperishable; and that, if the intelligent faculty should be rendered more comprehensive, it would require only a different and apportioned organization, *the body celestial* instead of *the body terrestrial*, to bring before every human soul the collective experience of its whole past existence. And this—this, perchance, is the dread book of judgment, in whose mysterious hieroglyphics every idle word is recorded! Yea, in the very nature of a living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened, or lost, from that living chain of causes, to all whose links, conscious or unconscious, the free will, our only absolute *self*, is co-extensive and co-present.

But not now dare I longer discourse of this, waiting for a loftier mood, and a nobler subject, warned from within and from without, that it is profanation to speak of these mysteries * τοῖς μηδέποτε φανταζθεῖσιν, ὡς καλὸν τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης πρόσωπον, καὶ ὡς ἄστε ἕσπερος ἄστε ἕωος ἄτω καλά. Τὸν γάρ ὁρῶντα πρὸς τὸ ὁρώμενον συγγενὲς καὶ ὁμοῖον ποιησάμενον δεῖ ἐπιβάλλειν τῇ ἑα· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πώποτε εἶδεν Ὀφθαλμος Ηλιον ἡλιοείδης μὴ γεγενήμενος, ἴδε το Καλον ἂν ἴδη Ψύχη μὴ κάλε γενομένη. PLOTINUS.

* "To those to whose imagination it has never been presented, how beautiful is the countenance of justice and wisdom; and that neither the morning nor the evening star are so fair. For, in order to direct the view aright, it behoves that the beholder should have made himself congenerous and similar to the object beheld. Never could the eye have beheld the sun, had not its own essence been soliform," (*that is, pre-configured to light by a similarity of essence with that of light,*) "neither can a soul not beautiful attain to an intuition of beauty."

CHAPTER VII.

Of the necessary consequences of the Hartleian theory—Of the original mistake or equivocation which procured admission for the theory—Memoria Technica.

We will pass by the utter incompatibility of such a law, (if law it may be called, which would itself be the slave of chances,) with even that *appearance* of rationality forced upon us by the outward phenomena of human conduct, abstracted from our own consciousness. We will agree to forget this for the moment, in order to fix our attention on that subordination of final to efficient causes in the human being, which flows of necessity from the assumption, that the will, and with the will all acts of thought and attention, are parts and products of this blind mechanism, instead of being distinct powers, whose function it is to control, determine, and modify the phantasma chaos of association. The soul becomes a mere ens logicum; for as a real separable being, it would be more worthless and ludicrous, than the Grimalkins in the Catharpsichord, described in the Spectator. For these did form a part of the process; but in Hartley's scheme the soul is present only to be pinched or *stroked*, while the very squeals or purring are produced by an agency wholly independent and alien. It involves all the difficulties, all the incomprehensibility (if it be not indeed, ὡς ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, the absurdity) of intercommunion between substances that have no one property in common, without any of the convenient consequences that bribed the judgment to the admission of the *dualistic* hypothesis. Accordingly, this caput mortuum of the Hartleian process has been rejected by his followers, and the consciousness considered as a *result*, as a *tune*, the common product of the breeze and the harp: though this again is the mere remotion of one absurdity, to make way for another equally preposterous. For what is harmony but a mode of relation, the very *esse* of which is *percipi?* An ens rationale, which presupposes the power, that by perceiving creates it? The razor's edge becomes a saw to the armed vision; and the delicious melodies of Purcell or Cimarosa might be disjointed stammerings to a hearer, whose partition of time should be a thousand times subtler than ours. But this obstacle too, let us imagine our-

selves to have surmounted, and "at one bound high overleap all bound!" Yet, according to his hypothesis, the disquisition, to which I am at present soliciting the reader's attention, may be as truly said to be written by Saint Paul's church, as by *me*; for it is the mere motion of my muscles and nerves: and these again are set in motion from external causes equally passive, which external causes stand themselves in interdependent connection with every thing that exists or has existed. Thus the whole universe co-operates to produce the minutest stroke of every letter, save only that I myself, and I alone, have nothing to do with it, but merely the causeless and *effectless* beholding of it when it is done. Yet scarcely can it be called a beholding; for it is neither an act nor an effect; but an impossible creation of a *something-nothing* out of its very contrary! It is the mere quick-silver plating behind a looking-glass; and in this alone consists the poor worthless I! The sum total of my moral and intellectual intercourse, dissolved into its elements, are reduced to *extension, motion, degrees of velocity*, and those diminished *copies* of configurative motion, which form what we call notions, and notions of notions. Of such philosophy well might Butler say—

> "The metaphysics but a puppet motion
> That goes with screws, the notion of a notion;
> The copy of a copy, and lame draught
> Unnaturally taken from a thought:
> That counterfeits all pantomimic tricks,
> And turns the eyes, like an old crucifix;
> That counterchanges whatsoe'er it calls
> B' another name, and makes it true or false;
> Turns truth to falsehood, falsehood into truth,
> By virtue of the Babylonian's tooth."
>
> MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.

The inventor of the watch did not in reality invent it; he only looked on, while the blind causes, the only true artists, were unfolding themselves. So must it have been too with my friend ALLSTON, when he sketched his picture of the dead man revived by the bones of the prophet Elijah. So must it have been with Mr. SOUTHEY and LORD BYRON, when the one *fancied* himself composing his "RODERICK," and the other his "CHILDE HAROLD." The same must hold good of all systems of philosophy; of all arts, governments, wars by sea and by land; in short, of all things that ever

have been or that ever will be produced. For, acccording to this system, it is not the affections and passions that are at work, in as far as they are *sensations* or *thoughts*. We only *fancy* that we act from rational resolves, or prudent motives, or from impulses of anger, love, or generosity. In all these cases the real agent is a *something-nothing-every-thing*, which does all of which we know, and knows nothing of all that itself does.

The existence of an infinite spirit, of an intelligent and holy will, must, on this system, be mere articulated motions of the air. For as the function of the human understanding is no other than merely (to appear to itself) to combine and to apply the phenomena of the association; and as these derive all their reality from the primary sensations; and the sensations again all *their* reality from the impressions ab extra; a God not visible, audible, or tangible, can exist only in the sounds and letters that form his name and attributes. If in *ourselves* there be no such faculties as those of the will, and the scientific reason, we must either have an *innate* idea of them, which would overthrow the whole system, or we can have no idea at all. The process, by which Hume degraded the notion of cause and effect into a blind product of delusion and habit, into the mere sensation of *proceeding* life (nisus vitalis) associated with the images of the memory; this same process must be repeated to the equal degradation of every *fundamental* idea in ethics or theology.

Far, very far, am I from burthening with the odium of these consequences the moral characters of those who first formed, or have since adopted the system! It is most noticeable of the excellent and pious Hartley, that in the proofs of the existence and attributes of God, with which his second volume commences, he makes no reference to the principles or results of the first. Nay, he assumes, as his foundations, ideas which, if we embrace the doctrines of his first volume, can exist no where but in the vibrations of the ethereal medium common to the nerves and to the atmosphere. Indeed, the whole of the second volume is, with the fewest possible exceptions, independent of his peculiar system. So true is it, that the faith, which saves and sanctifies, is a collective energy, a total act of the whole moral being; that its living sensorium is in the *heart;* and that no errors of the understanding can be morally arraigned, unless they have proceeded from the heart. But whether they be such, no man can be certain in the case of another, scarce-

ly, perhaps, even in his own. Hence it follows, by inevitable consequence, that man may perchance determine *what* is an heresy; but God can only know *who* is an heretic. It does not, however, by any means follow, that opinions fundamentally false are harmless. An hundred causes may co-exist to form one complex antidote. Yet the sting of the adder remains venomous, though there are many who have taken up the evil thing; and it hurted them not! Some indeed there seem to have been, in an unfortunate neighbour-nation at least, who have embraced this system with a full view of all its moral and religious consequences; some—

> "————who deem themselves most free,
> When they within this gross and visible sphere
> Chain down the winged thought, scoffing assent,
> Proud in their meanness; and themselves they cheat
> With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,
> Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,
> Self-working tools, uncaus'd effects, and all
> Those blink omniscients, those Almighty slaves,
> Untenanting Creation of its God!"

Such men need discipline, not argument; they must be made better men, before they can become wiser.

The attention will be more profitably employed in attempting to discover and expose the paralogisms, by the magic of which such a faith could find admission into minds framed for a nobler creed. These, it appears to me, may be all reduced to one sophism as their common genus; the mistaking the *conditions* of a thing for its *causes* and *essence;* and the process by which we arrive at the knowledge of a faculty, for the faculty itself. The air I breathe is the *condition* of my life, not its cause. We could never have learnt that we had eyes but by the process of seeing; yet having seen, we know that the eyes must have pre-existed in order to render the process of sight possible. Let us cross-examine Hartley's scheme under the guidance of this distinction; and we shall discover, that contemporaneity (Leibnitz's *Lex Continui*) is the *limit and condition* of the laws of mind, itself being rather a law of matter, at least of phenomena considered as material. At the utmost, it is to *thought* the same as the law of gravitation is to loco-motion. In every voluntary movement we first counteract gravitation, in order to avail ourselves of it. It must exist, that there may be a something to be counteracted, and which by its re-action, aids the

force that is exerted to resist it. Let us consider what we do when we leap. We first resist the gravitating power by an act purely voluntary, and then by another act, voluntary in part, we yield to it in order to light on the spot which we had previously proposed to ourselves. Now, let a man watch his mind while he is composing; or, to take a still more common case, while he is trying to recollect a name; and he will find the process completely analogous. Most of my readers will have observed a small water insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow, fringed with prismatic colours, on the sunny bottom of the brook; and will have noticed, how the little animal *wins* its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary *fulcrum* for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work, which relatively to each other are active and passive; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. (In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. But in common language, and especially on the subject of poetry, we appropriate the name to a superior degree of the faculty, joined to a superior voluntary control over it.)

Contemporaneity then, being the common condition of all the laws of association, and a component element in all the materia subjecta, the parts of which are to be associated, must needs be co-present with all. Nothing, therefore, can be more easy than to pass off on an incautious mind, this constant companion of each, for the essential substance of all. But if we appeal to our own consciousness, we shall find that even *time* itself, as the *cause* of a *particular* act of association, is distinct from contemporaneity, as the *condition* of *all* association. Seeing a mackerel, it may happen that I immediately think of gooseberries, because I at the same time ate mackerel with gooseberries as the sauce. The first syllable of the latter word, being that which had co-existed with the image of the bird so called, I may then think of a goose. In the next moment the image of a swan may arise before me, though I had never seen the two birds together. In the two former instances, I am conscious that their co-existence in *time* was the circumstance

that enabled me to recollect them; and equally conscious am I, that the latter was recalled to me by the joint operation of likeness and contrast. So it is with *cause* and *effect*; so too with *order*. So am I able to distinguish whether it was proximity in time, or continuity in space, that occasioned me to recall B on the mention of A. They cannot be indeed *separated* from contemporaneity; for that would be to separate them from the mind itself. The act of consciousness is indeed identical with *time*, considered in its essence. (I mean *time* per se, as contra-distinguished from our *notion* of time; for this is always blended with the idea of space, which, as the *contrary* of time, is therefore its *measure*.) Nevertheless, the accident of seeing two objects at the same moment, acts as a distinguishable cause from that of having seen them in the same place; and the true practical general law of association is this: that whatever makes certain parts of a total impression more vivid or distinct than the rest, will determine the mind to recall these, in preference to others equally linked together by the common condition of contemporaneity, or (what I deem a more appropriate and philosophical term) of *continuity*. But the will itself, by confining and intensifying * the attention, may arbitrarily give vividness or distinctness to any object whatsoever; and from hence we may deduce the uselessness, if not the absurdity, of certain recent schemes, which *promise* an artificial *memory*, but which in reality can only produce a confusion and debasement of the *fancy*. Sound logic, as the habitual subordination of the individual to the species, and of the species to the genus; philosopoical knowledge of facts under the relation of cause and effect; a cheerful and communicative temper, that disposes us to notice the similarities and contrasts of things, that we may be able to illustrate the one by the other; a quiet conscience; a condition free from anxieties; sound health, and, above all, (as far as relates to passive remembrance,) a healthy digestion; *these* are the best—these are the only ARTS OF MEMORY.

* I am aware that this word occurs neither in Johnson's Dictionary nor in any classical writer. But the word "*to intend*," which Newton and others before him employ in this sense, is now so completely appropriated to another meaning, that I could not use it without ambiguity: while to paraphrase the sense, as by *render intense*, would often break up the sentence, and destroy that harmony of the position of the words with the logical position of the thoughts, which is a beauty in all composition, and more especially desirable in a close philosophical investigation I have therefore hazarded the word *intensify*; though I confess it sounds uncouth to my own ear.

CHAPTER VIII.

The system of DUALISM, introduced by Des Cartes—Refined first by Spinoza, and afterwards by Leibnitz, into the doctrine of Harmonia præstabilita—Hylozoism—Materialism—Neither of these systems, on any possible theory of association, supplies or supersedes a theory of perception, or explains the formation of the associable.

To the best of my knowledge, Des Cartes was the first philosopher who introduced the absolute and essential heterogeneity of the soul as intelligence, and the body as matter. The assumption, and the form of speaking, have remained, though the denial of all other properties to matter but that of extension, on which denial the whole system of dualism is grounded, has been long exploded. For since impenetrability is intelligible only as a mode of resistance, its admission places the essence of *matter* in an act or power, which it possesses in common with *spirit;* and body and spirit are therefore no longer absolutely heterogeneous, but *may*, without any *absurdity*, be supposed to be different modes or degrees in perfection, of a common substratum. To this possibility, however, it was not the fashion to advert. The soul was a *thinking* substance; and body a *space-filling* substance. Yet the apparent action of each on the other pressed heavy on the philosopher, on the one hand; and no less heavily, on the other hand, pressed the evident truth, that the law of causalty holds only between homogeneous things, i. e. things having some common property, and cannot extend from one world into another, its opposite. A close analysis evinced it to be no less absurd, than the question, whether a man's affection for his wife lay North-east or South-west of the love he bore towards his child? Leibnitz's doctrine of a pre-established harmony, which he certainly borrowed from Spinoza, who had himself taken the hint from Des Cartes' animal machines, was in its *common* interpretation too strange to survive the inventor—too repugnant to our *common sense* (which is not indeed entitled to a judicial voice in the courts of scientific philosophy; but whose whispers still exert a strong secret influence.) Even Wolf, the admirer, and illustrious systematizer of the Leibnitzian doctrine, contents himself with defending the

possibility of the idea, but does not adopt it as a part of the edifice.

The hypothesis of Hylozoism, on the other side, is the death of all rational physiology, and, indeed, of all physical science; for that requires a limitation of terms, and cannot consist with the arbitrary power of multiplying attributes by occult qualities. Besides, it answers no purpose; unless, indeed, a difficulty can be solved by multiplying it, for that we can acquire a clearer notion of our soul, by being told that we have a million souls, and that every atom of our bodies has a soul of its own. Far more prudent is it to admit the difficulty once for all, and then let it lie at rest. There is a sediment, indeed, at the bottom of the vessel, but all the water above it is clear and transparent. The Hylozoist only shakes it up, and renders the whole turbid.

But it is not either the nature of man, or the duty of the philosopher, to despair, concerning any important problem, until, as in the squaring of the circle, the impossibility of a solution has been demonstrated. How the *esse* assumed as originally distinct from the *scire*, can ever unite itself with it; how *being* can transform itself into a *knowing*, becomes conceivable on one only condition; namely, if it can be shown that the vis representativa, or the sentient, is itself a species of being; i. e. either as a property or attribute, or as an hypostasis or self subsistence. The former is, indeed, the assumption of materialism; a system which could not but be patronized by the philosopher, if only it actually performed what it promises. But how any affection from without can metamorphose itself into perception or will, the materialist has hitherto left, not only as incomprehensible as he found it, but has aggravated it into a comprehensible absurdity. For, grant that an object from without could act upon the conscious *self*, as on a consubstantial object; yet such an affection could only engender something homogeneous with itself. Motion could only propagate motion. Matter has no *inward*. We remove one surface but to meet with another. We can but divide a particle into particles; and each atom comprehends in itself the properties of the material universe. Let any reflecting mind make the experiment of explaining to itself the evidence of our sensuous intuitions, from the hypothesis that in any given perception there is a something which has been communicated to it by an impact or an impression ab extra. In the first place, by the impact on the percepient or ens rep-

resentans, not the object itself, but only its action or effect, will pass into the same. Not the iron tongue, but its vibrations pass into the metal of the bell. Now in our immediate perception, it is not the mere power or act of the object, but the object itself, which is immediately present. We might, indeed, attempt to explain this result by a chain of *deductions* and *conclusions*; but that, first, the very faculty of deducing and concluding would equally demand an explanation; and, secondly, that there exists, in fact, no such intermediation by logical notions, such as those of cause and effect. It is the object itself, not the product of a syllogism, which is present to our consciousness. Or would we explain this supervention of the object to the sensation, by a productive faculty set in motion by an impulse; still the transition, into the percipient, of the object itself, from which the impulse proceeded, assumes a power that can permeate and wholly possess the soul,

> "And like a God, by spiritual art,
> Be all in all, and all in every part."
>
> COWLEY.

And how came the *percipient* here? And what is become of the wonder-promising MATTER, that was to perform all these marvels by force of mere figure, weight, and motion? The most consistent proceeding of the dogmatic materialist is to fall back into the common rank of *soul-and-bodyists*; to affect the mysterious, and declare the whole process a revelation *given*, and not to be *understood*, which it would be profane to examine too closely. Datur non intelligitur. But a revelation unconfirmed by miracles, and a faith not commanded by the conscience, a philosopher may venture to pass by, without suspecting himself of any irreligious tendency.

Thus, as materialism has been generally taught, it is utterly unintelligible, and owes all its proselytes to the propensity so common among men, to mistake distinct images for clear conceptions; and, vice versa, to reject as inconceivable whatever from its own nature is unimaginable. But as soon as it becomes intelligible, it ceases to be materialism. In order to explain *thinking*, as a material phenomenon, it is necessary to refine matter into a mere modification of intelligence, with the two-fold function of *appearing* and *perceiving*. Even so did Priestly in his controversy with Price! He stript matter of all its material properties; substituted

spiritual powers, and when we expected to find a body, behold! we had nothing but its ghost! the *apparition* of a defunct substance!

I shall not dilate further on this subject; because it will (if God grant health and permission) be treated of at large, and systematically, in a work, which I have many years been preparing, on the PRODUCTIVE LOGOS human and divine; with, and, as the introduction to, a full commentary on the Gospel of St. John. To make myself intelligible as far as my present subject requires, it will be sufficient briefly to observe—1. That all association demands and presupposes the existence of the thoughts and images to be associated. 2. The hypothesis of an external world exactly correspondent to those images or modifications of our own being, which alone (according to this system) we actually behold, is as thorough idealism as Berkeley's, inasmuch as it equally (perhaps, in a more perfect degree) removes all reality and immediateness of perception, and places us in a dream-world of phantoms and spectres, the inexplicable swarm and equivocal generation of motions in our own brains. 3. That this hypothesis neither involves the explanation, nor precludes the necessity, of a mechanism and co-adequate forces in the percipient, which at the more than magic touch of the impulse from without, is to create anew for itself the correspondent object. The formation of a copy is not solved by the mere pre-existence of an original; the copyist of Raphael's Transfiguration must repeat more or less perfectly the process of Raphael. It would be easy to explain a thought from the image on the retina, and that from the geometry of light, if this very light did not present the very same difficulty. We might as rationally chant the Brahmin creed of the tortoise that supported the bear, that supported the elephant, that supported the world, to the tune of "This is the house that Jack built." The *sic Deo placitum est* we all admit as the sufficient cause, and the divine goodness as the sufficient reason; but an answer to the whence? and why? is no answer to the how; which alone is the physiologist's concern. It is a mere sophisma pigrum, and (as Bacon hath said) the arrogance of pusillanimity, which lifts up the idol of a mortal's fancy, and commands us to fall down and worship it, as a work of divine wisdom, an ancile or palladium fallen from heaven. By the very same argument the supporters of the Ptolemaic system might have rebuffed

the Newtonian, and pointing to the sky with self-complacent * grin, have appealed to *common sense*, whether the sun did not move, and the earth stand still.

* "And coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin." *Pope.*

CHAPTER IX.

Is philosophy possible as a science? and what are its conditions?—Giordano Bruno—Literary aristocracy, or the existence of a tacit compact among the learned as a privileged order—The author's obligations to the Mystics—to Emanuel Kant—The difference between the letter and the spirit of Kant's writings, and a vindication of prudence in the teaching of philosophy—Fichte's attempt to complete the critical system—Its partial success and ultimate failure—Obligations to Schelling; and, among English writers, to Saumarez.

After I had successively studied in the schools of Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Hartley, and could find in neither of them an abiding place for my reason, I began to ask myself, is a system of philosophy, as different from mere history and historic classification, possible? If possible, what are its necessary conditions? I was for a while disposed to answer the first question in the negative, and to admit that the sole practicable employment for the human mind was to observe, to collect, and to classify. But I soon felt, that human nature itself fought up against this wilful resignation of intellect; and as soon did I find, that the scheme, taken with all its consequences, and cleared of all inconsistencies, was not less impracticable, than contra-natural. Assume, in its full extent, the position, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensa*, without Leibnitz's qualifying *præter ipsum intellectum*, and in the same sense in which it was understood by Hartley and Condillac, and what Hume had demonstratively deduced from this concession concerning cause and effect, will apply with equal and crushing force to all the * other eleven categorical forms, and the logical functions corresponding to them. How can we make bricks without straw? Or build without cement? We learn all things indeed by *occasion* of experience; but the very facts so learnt force us inward on the antecedents, that must be pre-supposed in order to render experience itself possible. The first book of Locke's Essays (if the supposed error, which it labours to subvert, be not a mere thing of straw; an absurdity, which no man ever did, or, indeed,

* Videlicet; quantity, quality, relation, and mode, each consisting of three subdivisions. Vide Kritik der reinen Vernunft, p. 95, and 106. See, too, the judicious remarks in Locke and Hume.

ever could believe) is formed on a Σόφισμα Ετεροζητησέως, and involves the old mistake of *cum hoc : ergo, propter hoc.*

The term Philosophy, defines itself as an affectionate seeking after the truth; but Truth is the correlative of Being. This again is no way conceivable; but by assuming as a postulate, that both are, ab initio, identical and co-inherent; that intelligence and being are reciprocally each other's Substrate. I presumed that this was a possible conception (*i. e.* that it involved no logical inconsonance) from the length of time during which the scholastic definition of the *Supreme Being*, as actus purissimus sine ulla potentialitate, was received in the schools of Theology, both by the Pontifician and the Reformed divines. The early study of Plato and Plotinus, with the commentaries and the THEOLOGIA PLATONICA, of the illustrious Florentine; of Proclus, and Gemistius Pletho; and, at a later period, of the "De Immenso et Innumerabili," and the "*De la causa, principio et uno*," of the philosoper of Nola, who could boast of a Sir Philip Sydney, and Fulke Greville among his patrons, and whom the idolaters of Rome burnt as an atheist in the year 1660; had all contributed to prepare my mind for the reception and welcoming of the Cogito quia sum, et sum quia Cogito; a philosophy of seeming hardihood, but certainly the most ancient, and therefore presumptively, the most natural.

Why need I be afraid? Say rather how dare I be ashamed of the Teutonic theosophist, Jacob Behmen? Many, indeed, and gross were his delusions; and such as furnish frequent and ample occasion for the triumph of the learned over the poor ignorant *shoemaker*, who had dared to think for himself. But while we remember that these delusions were such as might be anticipated from his utter want of all intellectual discipline, and from his ignorance of rational psychology, let it not be forgotten that the latter defect he had in common with the most learned theologians of his age. Neither with books, nor with book-learned men was he conversant. A meek and shy quietist, his intellectual powers were never stimulated into fev'rous energy by crowds of proselytes, or by the ambition of proselyting. JACOB BEHMEN was an enthusiast, in the strictest sense, as not merely distinguished, but as contradistinguished, from a fanatic. While I in part translate the following observations from a contemporary writer of the Continent, let me be permitted to premise, that I might have transcribed the sub-

stance from memoranda of my own, which were written many years before his pamphlet was given to the world; and that I prefer another's words to my own, partly as a tribute due to priority of publication, but still more from the pleasure of sympathy, in a case where *coincidence* only was possible.

Whoever is acquainted with the history of philosophy, during the two or three last centuries, cannot but admit, that there appears to have existed a sort of secret and tacit compact among the learned, not to pass beyond a certain limit in speculative science. The privilege of free thought, so highly extolled, has at no time been held valid in actual practice, except within this limit; and not a single stride beyond it has ever been ventured without bringing obloquy on the transgressor. The few men of genius among the learned class, who actually did overstep this boundary, anxiously avoided the appearance of having so done. Therefore, the true depth of science, and the penetration to the inmost centre, from which all the lines of knowledge diverge, to their ever distant circumference, was abandoned to the illiterate and the simple, whom unstilled yearning, and an original ebulliency of spirit, had urged to the investigation of the indwelling and living ground of all things. These, then, because their names had never been inrolled in the guilds of the learned, were persecuted by the registered livery-men as interlopers on their rights and privileges. All, without distinction, were branded as fanatics and phantasts; not only those whose wild and exorbitant imaginations had actually engendered only extravagant and grotesque phantasms, and whose productions were, for the most part, poor copies and gross caricatures of genuine inspiration; but the truly inspired likewise, the originals themselves! And this for no other reason but because they were the *unlearned* men of humble and obscure occupations. When, and from whom among the literati by profession, have we ever heard the divine doxology repeated, "I thank thee, O Father! Lord of Heaven and Earth! because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes?" No! the haughty priests of learning not only banished from the schools and marts of science all who had dared draw living waters from the *fountain*, but drove them out of the very temple, which, mean time, "*buyers and sellers, and money-changers*" were suffered to make "*a den of thieves.*"

And yet it would not be easy to discover any substantial ground for this contemptuous pride in those literati, who have most distinguished themselves by their scorn of BEHMEN, DE THOYRAS, GEORGE FOX, &c.; unless it be, that *they* could write orthographically, make smooth periods, and had the fashions of authorship almost literally *at their finger's ends*, while the latter, in simplicity of soul, made their words immediate echoes of their feelings. Hence the frequency of those phrases among them, which have been mistaken for pretences to immediate inspiration; as for instance, "*it was delivered unto me*," "*I strove not to speak*," "*I said, I will be silent*," "*but the word was in my heart as a burning fire*," "*and I could not forbear.*" Hence, too, the unwillingness to give offence; hence the foresight, and the dread of the clamours which would be raised against them, so frequently avowed in the writings of these men, and expressed, as was natural, in the words of the only book with which they were familiar. "Woe is me that I am become a man of strife, and a man of contention—I love peace: the souls of men are dear unto me: yet because I seek for light, every one of them doth curse me!" O! it requires deeper feeling, and a stronger imagination, than belong to most of those to whom reasoning and fluent expression have been as a trade learnt in boyhood, to conceive with what *might*, with what inward *strivings* and *commotion*, the perception of a new and vital TRUTH takes possession of an uneducated man of genius. His meditations are almost inevitably employed on the eternal, or the everlasting; for "*the world is not his friend, nor the world's law.*" Need we then be surprised, that under an excitement at once so strong and so unusual, the man's body should sympathize with the struggles of his mind; or that he should at times be so far deluded as to mistake the tumultuous sensations of his nerves, and the coexisting spectres of his fancy, as parts or symbols of the truths which were opening on him? It has indeed been plausibly observed, that in order to derive any advantage, or to collect any intelligible meaning, from the writings of these ignorant mystics, the reader must bring with him a spirit and judgment superior to that of the writers themselves:

> "And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?"
>
> PARADISE REGAINED.

—A sophism, which, I fully agree with Warburton, is unworthy of Milton; how much more so of the awful person, in whose mouth he has placed it? One assertion I will venture to make, as suggested by my own experience, that there exists folios on the human understanding, and the nature of man, which would have a far juster claim to their high rank and celebrity, if in the whole huge volume there could be found as much fulness of heart and intellect as burst forth in many a simple page of GEORGE FOX, JACOB BEHMEN, and even of Behmen's commentator, the pious and fervid WILLIAM LAW.

The feeling of gratitude which I cherish towards these men has caused me to digress further than I had foreseen or proposed; but to have passed them over in an historical sketch of my literary life and opinions, would have seemed to me like the denial of a debt, the concealment of a boon. For the writings of these mystics acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the *heart* in the *head*; gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentment, that all the products of the mere *reflective* faculty partook of DEATH, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled from some root to which I had not penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter. If they were too often a moving cloud of smoke to me by day, yet they were always a pillar of fire throughout the night, during my wanderings through the wilderness of doubt, and enabled me to skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of utter unbelief. That the system is capable of being converted into an irreligious PANTHEISM, I well know. The ETHICS of SPINOZA may, or may not, be an instance. But, at no time could I believe, that *in itself*, and *essentially*, it is incompatible with religion, natural or revealed; and now I am most thoroughly persuaded of the contrary. The writings of the illustrious sage of Konigsberg, the founder of the Critical Philosophy, more than any other work, at once invigorated and disciplined my understanding. The originality, the depth, and the compression of the thoughts; the novelty and subtlety, yet solidity and importance, of the distinctions; the adamantine chain of the logic; and, I will venture to add, (paradox as it will appear to those who have taken their notion of IMMANUEL KANT, from Reviewers and Frenchmen,) the *clear-*

ness and *evidence* of the "CRITIQUE OF THE PURE REASON;" of the "JUDGMENT;" of the "METAPHISICAL ELEMENTS OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY," and of his "RELIGION WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF PURE REASON," took possession of me as with a giant's hand. After fifteen years familiarity with them, I still read these and all his other productions with undiminished delight and increasing admiration. The few passages that remained obscure to me, after due efforts of thought, (as the chapter on *original apperception*,) and the apparent contradictions which occur, I soon found were hints and insinuations referring to ideas, which KANT either did not think it prudent to avow, or which he considered as consistently *left behind* in a pure analysis, not of human nature in toto, but of the speculative intellect alone. Here, therefore, he was constrained to commence at the point of *reflection*, or natural consciousness: while in his *moral* system he was permitted to assume a higher ground (the autonomy of the will) as a POSTULATE deducible from the unconditional command, or (in the technical language of his school) the categorical imperative, of the conscience. He had been in imminent danger of persecution during the reign of the late king of Prussia, that strange compound of lawless debauchery, and priest-ridden superstition; and it is probable that he had little inclination, in his old age, to act over again the fortunes and hair-breadth escapes of Wolf. The expulsion of the first among Kant's disciples, who attempted to complete his system, from the university of Jena, with the confiscation and prohibition of the obnoxious work, by the joint efforts of the courts of Saxony and Hanover, supplied experimental proof, that the venerable old man's caution was not groundless. In spite, therefore, of his own declarations, I could never believe it was possible for him to have meant no more by his *Noumenon*, or THING IN ITSELF, than his mere words express; or, that in his own conception he confined the whole *plastic* power to the forms of the intellect, leaving for the external cause, for the *materiale* of our sensations, a matter without form, which is doubtless inconceivable. I entertained doubts likewise, whether, in his own mind, he even laid *all* the stress, which he appears to do, on the moral postulates.

An IDEA, in the *highest* sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a *symbol*; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction. Φώνησι Συνίουσιν: and for those

who could not pierce through this symbolical husk, his writings were not intended. Questions which can not be fully answered without exposing the respondent to personal danger, are not entitled to a fair answer; and yet to say this openly, would in many cases furnish the very advantage which the adversary is insidiously seeking after. Veracity does not consist in *saying*, but in the intention of *communicating* truth; and the philosopher who cannot utter the whole truth without conveying falsehood, and at the same time, perhaps, exciting the most malignant passions, is constrained to express himself either *mythically* or equivocally. When Kant, therefore, was importuned to settle the disputes of his commentators himself, by declaring what he meant, how could he decline the honours of martyrdom with less offence than by simply replying, "I meant what I said; and at the age of near four score, I have something else, and more important to do, than to write a commentary on my own works."

FICHTE's Wissenschaftslehre, or *Lore* of Ultimate Science, was to add the key-stone of the arch; and by commencing with an *act*, instead of a *thing* or *substance*, Fichte assuredly gave the first mortal blow to Spinozism, as taught by Spinoza himself; and supplied the *idea* of a system truly metaphysical, and of a *metaphysique* truly systematic: (i. e. having its spring and principle within itself.) But this fundamental idea he overbuilt with a heavy mass of mere *notions*, and psychological acts of arbitrary reflection. Thus his theory degenerated into a crude egoismus,* a boastful and hyper-

* The following burlesque on the Fichtean Egoismus may, perhaps, be amusing to the few who have studied the system, and to those who are unacquainted with it, may convey as tolerable a likeness of Fichte's idealism as can be expected from an avowed caricature.

The categorical imperative, or the annunciation of the new Teutonic God, ΕΓΩΕΝΚΑΙΠΑΝ: a dithyrambic Ode, by QUERKOPF VON KLUBSTICK, Grammarian, and Subrector in Gymnasio.****

Eu! Dei vices gerens, ipse Divus,
(*Speak English, Friend!*) the God Imperativus,
Here on this market-cross aloud I cry:
I, I, I! I itself I!
The form and the substance, the what and the why,
The when and the where, and the low and the high,
The inside and outside, the earth and the sky,
I, you, and he, and he, you and I,
All souls and all bodies are I itself I!
All I itself I!
(Fools a truce with this startling!)

stoic hostility to NATURE, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy: while his *religion* consisted in the assumption of a mere ORDO ORDINANS, which we were permitted *exoterice* to call God; and his *ethics* in an ascetic, and almost monkish mortification of the natural passions and desires.

In Schelling's "NATUR-PHILOSOPHIE," and the "SYSTEM DES TRANSCENDENTALEN IDEALISMUS," I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do.

I have introduced this statement, as appropriate to the narrative nature of this sketch; yet rather in reference to the work which I have announced in a preceding page, than to my present subject. It would be but a mere act of justice to myself, were I to warn my future readers, that an identity of thought, or even similarity of phrase will not be at all times a certain proof that the passage has been borrowed from Schelling, or that the conceptions were originally learnt from him. In this instance, as in the dramatic lectures of Schlegel to which I have before alluded, from the same motive of self-defence against the charge of plagiarism, many of the most striking resemblances; indeed, all the main and fundamental ideas, were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a single page of the German Philosopher; and I might, indeed, affirm with truth, before the more important works of Schelling had been writ-

All my I! all my I!
He's a heretic dog who but adds Betty Martin!
Thus cried the God with high imperial tone:
In robe of stiffest state, that scoff'd at beauty,
A pronoun-verb imperative he shone—
Then substantive and plural-singular grown,
He thus spake on: Behold in I alone
(For ethics boast a syntax of their own)
Or if in ye, yet as I doth depute ye,
In O! I, you, the vocative of duty!
I of the world's whole Lexicon the root!
Of the whole universe of touch, sound, sight,
The genitive and ablative to boot:
The accusative of wrong, the nom'native of right,
And in all cases the case absolute!
Self-construed, I all other moods decline:
Imperative, from nothing we derive us;
Yet as a super-postulate of mine,
Unconstrued antecedence I assign
To X, Y, Z, the God infinitivus!

ten, or at least made public. Nor is this coincidence at all to be wondered at. We had studied in the same school; been disciplined by the same preparatory philosophy, namely, the writings of Kant; we had both equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno; and Schelling has lately, and, as of recent acquisition, avowed that same affectionate reverence for the labours of Behmen, and other mystics, which I had formed at a much earlier period. The coincidence of SCHELLING'S system with certain general ideas of Behmen, he declares to have been *mere* coincidence; while *my* obligations have been more direct. *He* needs give to Behmen only feelings of sympathy; while I owe him a debt of gratitude. God forbid! that I should be suspected of a wish to enter into a rivalry with SCHELLING for the honours so unequivocally his right, not only as a great and original genius, but as the *founder* of the PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE, and as the most successful *improver* of the Dynamic System,* which, begun by Bruno, was re-introduced (in a more philosophical form, and freed from all its impurities and visionary accompaniments) by KANT; in whom it was the native and necessary growth of his own sys-

*It would be an act of high and almost criminal injustice to pass over in silence the name of Mr. RICHARD SAUMAREZ, a gentleman equally well known as a medical man and as a philanthropist, but who demands notice on the present occasion as the author of "A new System of Physiology," in two volumes octavo, published 1797; and in 1812, of "An Examination of the natural and artificial Systems of Philosophy which now prevail," in one volume octavo, entitled, "The Principles of physiological and physical science." The latter work is not quite equal to the former in style or arrangement; and there is a greater necessity of distinguishing the principles of the author's philosophy from his conjectures concerning colour, the atmospheric matter, comets, &c. which, whether just or erroneous, are by no means necessary consequences of that philosophy. Yet even in this department of this volume, which I regard as comparatively the inferior work, the reasonings by which Mr. Saumarez invalidates the immanence of an infinite power in any finite substance, are the offspring of no common mind; and the experiment on the expansibility of the air is at least plausible and highly ingenious. But the merit, which will secure both to the book and to the writer a high and honorable name with posterity, consists in the masterly force of reasoning, and the copiousness of induction, with which he has assailed, and (in my opinion) subverted the tyranny of the mechanic system in physiology; established not only the existence of final causes, but their necessity and efficiency in every system that merits the name of philosophical; and substituting life and progressive power, for the contradictory *inert force*, has a right to be known and remembered as the first instaurator of the dynamic philosophy in England. The author's views, as far as concerns himself, are unborrowed and completely his own, as he neither possessed, nor do his writings discover, the least acquaintance with the works of Kant, in which the germs of philosophy exist, and his volumes were published many years before the full development of these germs by Schelling. Mr. Saumarez's detection of the Brunonian system was no light or ordinary service at the time; and I scarcely remember in any work on any subject a confutation so thoroughly satisfactory. It is sufficient at this time to have stated the fact; as in the preface to the work, which I have already announced on the Logos, I have exhibited in detail the merits of this writer and genuine philosopher, who needed only have taken his foundations somewhat deeper and wider to have superseded a considerable part of my labours.

tem. KANT's followers, however, on whom (for the greater part) their master's *cloak* had fallen, without, or with a very scanty portion of, his *spirit*, had adopted his dynamic ideas only as a more refined species of mechanics. With exception of one or two fundamental ideas, which cannot be withheld from FICHTE, to SCHELLING we owe the completion, and the most important victories, of this revolution in philosophy. To me it will be happiness and honour enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes. Whether a work is the offspring of a man's own spirit, and the product of original thinking, will be discovered by those who are its sole legitimate judges, by better tests than the mere reference to dates. For readers in general, let whatever shall be found in this, or any future work of mine, that resembles, or coincides with, the doctrines of my German predecessor, though contemporary, be wholly attributed to *him:* provided, that the absence of distinct references to his books, which I could not at all times make with truth as designating citations or thoughts actually *derived* from him, and which, I trust, would, after this general acknowledgement, be superfluous, be not charged on me as an ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism. I have not indeed (eheu! res angusta domi!) been hitherto able to procure more than two of his books, viz: the first volume of his collected Tracts, and his System of Transcendental Idealism; to which, however, I must add a small pamphlet against Fichte, the spirit of which was to *my* feelings painfully incongruous with the principles, and which (with the usual allowance afforded to an antithesis) displayed the love of wisdom rather than the wisdom of love. I regard truth as a divine ventriloquist: I care not from whose mouth the sounds are supposed to proceed, if only the words are audible and intelligible. "Albeit, I must confess to be half in doubt, whether I should bring it forth or no, it being so contrary to the eye of the world, and the world so potent in most men's hearts, that I shall endanger either not to be regarded or not to be understood."—MILTON: *Reason of Church Government.*

And to conclude the subject of citation, with a cluster of citations, which, as taken from books not in common use, may contribute to the reader's amusement, as a voluntary before a sermon.

"Dolet mihi quidem deliciis literarum inescatos subito jam homines adeo esse, præsertim qui Christianos se profitentur, et legere nisi quod ad delectationem facit, sustineant nihil: unde et disciplinæ severiores et philosophia ipsa jam fere prorsus etiam a doctis negliguntur. Quod quidem propositum studiorum, nisi mature corrigitur, tam magnum rebus incommodum dabit, quam dedit Barbaries olim. Pertinax res Barbaries est, fateor: sed minus potest tamen, quam illa mollities et *persuasa prudentia* literarum, quæ si *ratione* caret, sapientiæ virtutisque *specie* mortales misere circumducit. Succedet igitur, ut arbitror, haud ita multo post, pro rusticana seculi nostri ruditate captatrix illa *communiloquentia* robur animi virilis omne, omnem virtutem masculam profligatura, nisi cavetur."

Simon Grynæus, candido lectori, prefixed to the Latin translation of Plato, by Marsilius Ficinus. Lugduni, 1557. A too prophetic remark, which has been in fulfilment from the year 1680 to the present, 1815. *N. B.* By "persuasa prudentia," Grynæus means self-complacent *common sense* as opposed to science and philosophic reason.

"Est medius ordo et velut equestris Ingeniorum quidem sagacium et rebus humanis commodorum, non tamen in primam magnitudinem patentium. Eorum hominum, ut ita dicam, major annona est. Sedulum esse, nihil temere loqui, assuescere labori, et imagine prudentiæ et modestiæ tegere angustiores partes captus dum exercitationem et usum, quo isti in civilibus rebus pollent, pro natura et magnitudine ingenii plerique accipiunt."

Barclaii Argenis, p. 71.

"As, therefore, physicians are many times forced to leave such methods of curing as themselves know to be fittest, and, being over-ruled by the sick man's impatience, are fain to try the best they can; in like sort, considering how the case doth stand with the present age, full of tongue and weak of brain, behold we would, (*if our subject permitted it,*) yield to the stream thereof. That way we would be contented to prove our thesis, which, being the worse in itself, notwithstanding, is now, by reason of common imbecility, the fitter and likelier to be brooked."—Hooker.

If this fear could be rationally entertained in the controversial age of Hooker, under the then robust discipline of the scholastic logic, pardonably may a writer of the present times anticipate a

scanty audience for abstrusest themes, and truths that can neither be communicated nor received without effort of thought, as well as patience of attention.

> "Che s'io non erro al calcular de' punti,
> Par ch' *Asinini* Stella a noi predomini,
> E'l Somaro e'l castron si sian congiunti.
> Il tempo d'Apuleio piu non si nomini:
> Che se allora un sol Huom sembrava un Asino,
> Mille Asini a miei di rassembran Huomini!"
>
> DI SALVATOR ROSA, Satir. I. l. 10.

CHAPTER X.

A chapter of digression and anecdotes, as an interlude preceding that on the nature and genesis of the imagination or plastic power—On pedantry and pedantic expressions—Advice to young authors respecting publication—Various anecdotes of the author's literary life, and the progress of his opinions in religion and politics.

"ESEMPLASTIC. *The word is not in Johnson, nor have I met with it elsewhere.*" Neither have I! I constructed it myself from the Greek words εις εν πλαττειν, i. e. to shape into one; because, having to convey a new sense, I thought that a new term would both aid the recollection of my meaning, and prevent its being confounded with the usual import of the word imagination. "*But this is pedantry!*" Not necessarily so, I hope. If I am not misinformed, pedantry consists in the use of words unsuitable to the time, place, and company. The language of the market would be in the schools as *pedantic*, though it might not be reprobated by that name, as the language of the schools in the market. The mere man of the world, who insists that no other terms but such as occur in common conversation should be employed in a scientific disquisition, and, with no greater precision, is as truly a *pedant* as the man of letters, who, either over-rating the acquirements of his auditors, or misled by his own familiarity with technical or scholastic terms, converses at the wine-table with his mind fixed on his museum or laboratory; even though the latter pedant, instead of desiring his wife to *make the tea*, should bid her add to the quant. suff. of thea sinensis the oxyd of hydrogen saturated with caloric. To use the colloquial (and, in truth, somewhat *vulgar*) metaphor, if the pedant of the cloister, and the pedant of the lobby, both *smell equally of the shop*, yet the odour from the Russian binding of good old *authentic-looking* folios and quartos, is less annoying than the steams from the tavern or bagnio. Nay, though the pedantry of the scholar should betray a little ostentation, yet a well-conditioned mind would more easily, methinks, tolerate the *fox brush* of learned vanity, than the *sans culotterie* of a contemptuous ignorance, that assumes a merit from mutilation in the self-consoling sneer at the pompous incumbrance of tails.

The first lesson of philosophic discipline is to wean the student's attention from the DEGREES of things, which alone form the vocabulary of common life, and to direct it to the KIND, abstracted from *degree*. Thus the chemical student is taught not to be startled at disquisitions on the heat in ice, or on latent and fixible light. In such discourse, the instructor has no other alternative than either to use old words with new meanings, (the plan adopted by Darwin in his Zoonomia,) or to introduce new terms, after the example of Linnæus, and the framers of the present chemical nomenclature. The latter mode is evidently preferable, were it only that the former demands a two-fold exertion of thought in one and the same act. For the reader (or hearer) is required not only to learn and bear in mind the new definition, but to unlearn, and keep out of his view, the old and habitual meaning; a far more difficult and perplexing task, and for which the mere *semblance* of eschewing pedantry seems to me an inadequate compensation. Where, indeed, it is in our power to recall an appropriate term that had, without sufficient reason, become obsolete, it is doubtless a less evil to restore than to coin anew. Thus, to express in one word all that appertains to the perception considered as passive, and merely recipient, I have adopted from our elder classics the word *sensuous*; because *sensual* is not at present used except in a bad sense, or at least as a *moral* distinction, while *sensitive* and *sensible* would each convey a different meaning. Thus, too, I have followed Hooker, Sanderson, Milton, &c. in designating the *immediateness* of any act or object of knowledge by the word *intuition*, used sometimes subjectively, sometimes objectively, even as we use the word, thought; now as *the* thought, or act of thinking, and now as *a* thought, or the object of our reflection: and we do this without confusion or obscurity. The very words *objective* and *subjective*, of such constant recurrence in the schools of yore, I have ventured to reintroduce, because I could not so briefly, or conveniently, by any more familiar terms, distinguish the percipere from the percipi. Lastly, I have cautiously discriminated the terms, the REASON, and the UNDERSTANDING, encouraged and confirmed by the authority of our genuine divines and philosophers, before the revolution:

> ——— "both life, and sense,
> Fancy, and *understanding*: whence the soul
> *Reason* receives, and REASON is her *being*,

DISCURSIVE OR INTUITIVE. Discourse *
Is oftest your's, the latter most is our's,
Differing but in *degree*, in *kind* the same."

PARADISE LOST, Book V.

I say, that I was *confirmed* by authority so venerable; for I had previous and higher motives in my own conviction of the importance, nay, of the necessity of the distinction, as both an indispensable condition and a vital part of all sound speculation in metaphysics, ethical or theological. To establish this distinction was one main object of THE FRIEND; if even in a biography of my own literary life I can with propriety refer to a work which was printed rather than published, or so published that it had been well for the unfortunate author if it had remained in manuscript! I have even at this time bitter cause for remembering that which a number of my subscribers have but a trifling motive for forgetting. This effusion might have been spared; but I would fain flatter myself that the reader will be less austere than an oriental professor of the bastinado, who, during an attempt to extort per argumentum baculinum a full confession from a culprit, interrupted his outcry of pain by reminding him that it was "*a mere digression!*" All this noise, Sir, *is* nothing to the point, and no sort of answer to my QUESTIONS! *Ah! but* (replied the sufferer) *it is the most pertinent reply in nature to your blows.*

An imprudent man, of common goodness of heart, cannot but wish to turn even his imprudences to the benefit of others, as far as *this* is possible. If, therefore, any one of the readers of this semi-narrative should be preparing or intending a periodical work, I warn him, in the first place, against trusting in the number of names on his subscription list. For he cannot be certain that the names were put down by sufficient authority; or should that be ascertained, it still remains to be known, whether they were not extorted by some over zealous friend's importunity; whether the subscriber had not yielded his name merely from want of courage to answer no! and with the intention of dropping the work as soon as

* But for sundry notes on Shakspeare, &c. which have fallen in my way, I should have deemed it unnecessary to observe, that *discourse* here, or elsewhere, does not mean what we *now* call discoursing; but the *discursion* of the *mind*, the processes of generalization and subsumption, of deduction and conclusion. Thus philosophy has *hitherto* been DISCURSIVE, while Geometry is *always*, and *essentially*, INTUITIVE.

possible. One gentleman procured me nearly a hundred names for THE FRIEND, and not only took frequent opportunity to remind me of his success in his canvas, but laboured to impress my mind with the sense of the obligation I was under to the subscribers; for (as he very pertinently admonished me) "*fifty-two shillings* a year was a large sum to be bestowed on one individual, where there were so many objects of charity with strong claims to the assistance of the benevolent." Of these hundred patrons ninety threw up the publication before the fourth number, without any notice; though it was well known to them, that in consequence of the distance, and slowness and irregularity of the conveyance, I was compelled to lay in a stock of *stamped* paper for at least eight weeks beforehand; each sheet of which stood me in five pence previous to its arrival at my printer's; though the subscription money was not to be received till the twenty-first week after the commencement of the work; and lastly, though it was in nine cases out of ten impracticable for me to receive the money for two or three numbers, without paying an equal sum for the postage.

In confirmation of my first caveat, I will select one fact among *many*. On my list of subscribers, among a considerable number of names equally flattering, was that of an Earl of Cork, with his address. He might as well have been an Earl of Bottle, for aught *I* knew of him, who had been content to reverence the peerage in abstracto, rather than in concretis. Of course, THE FRIEND was regularly sent as far, if I remember right, as the eighteenth number, i. e. till a fortnight before the subscription was to be paid. And lo! just at this time I received a letter from his lordship, reproving me in language far more lordly than courteous, for my impudence in directing my pamphlets to him, who knew nothing of me or my work! Seventeen or eighteen numbers of which, however, his lordship was pleased to retain, probably for the culinary or post-culinary conveniences of his servants.

Secondly, I warn all others from the attempt to deviate from the ordinary mode of publishing a work by *the trade*. I thought, indeed, that to the purchaser it was indifferent, whether thirty per cent. of the purchase money went to the booksellers or to the government; and that the convenience of receiving the work by the post at his own door would give the preference to the latter. It is hard, I own, to have been labouring for years, in collecting and ar-

ranging the materials; to have spent every shilling that could be spared after the necessaries of life had been furnished, in buying books, or in journies for the purpose of consulting them, or of acquiring facts at the fountain head; then to buy the paper, pay for the printing, &c. all at least fifteen per cent. beyond what *the trade* would have paid; and then, after all, to give thirty per cent. not of the nett profits, but of the gross results of the sale, to a man who has merely to give the books shelf or warehouse room, and permit his apprentice to hand them over the counter to those who may ask for them; and this, too, copy by copy, although, if the work be on any philosophical or scientific subject, it may be years before the edition is sold off. All this, I confess, must seem a hardship, and one to which the products of industry in no other mode of exertion are subject. Yet even this is better, far better, than to attempt in any way to unite the functions of author and publisher. But the most prudent mode is to sell the copy-right, at least of one or more editions, for the most that *the trade* will offer. By few, only, can a large remuneration be expected; but fifty pounds and ease of mind are of more real advantage to a literary man, than the *chance* of five hundred, with the *certainty* of insult and degrading anxieties. I shall have been grievously misunderstood, if this statement should be interpreted as written with the desire of detracting from the character of booksellers or publishers. The individuals did not make the laws and customs of their trade; but, as in every other trade, take them as they find them. Till the evil can be proved to be removable, and without the substitution of an equal or greater inconvenience, it were neither wise nor manly even to complain of it. But to use it as a pretext for speaking, or even for thinking, or feeling, unkindly or opprobiously of the tradesmen, as *individuals*, would be something worse than unwise or even than unmanly; it would be immoral and calumnious! My motives point in a far different direction, and to far other objects, as will be seen in the conclusion of the chapter.

A learned and exemplary old clergyman, who many years ago went to his reward, followed by the regrets and blessings of his flock, published, at his own expense, two volumes octavo, entitled, a new Theory of Redemption. The work was most severely handled in the Monthly or Critical Review, I forget which; and this unprovoked hostility became the good old man's favorite topic

of conversation among his friends. Well! (he used to exclaim,) in the SECOND edition, I shall have an opportunity of exposing both the ignorance and the malignity of the anonymous critic. Two or three years, however, passed by without any tidings from the bookseller, who had undertaken the printing and publication of the work, and who was perfectly at his ease, as the author was known to be a man of large property. At length the *accounts* were written for; and in the course of a few weeks they were presented by the *rider* for the house, in person. My old friend put on his spectacles, and holding the scroll with no very firm hand, began—*Paper, so much:* O, moderate enough—not at all beyond my expectation! *Printing, so much:* Well! moderate enough! *Stitching, covers, advertisements, carriage, &c. so much:* Still nothing amiss. *Selleridge,* (for orthography is no necessary part of a bookseller's literary acquirements,) £3. 3*s*. Bless me! only three guineas for the what d'ye call it? the *selleridge?* No more, Sir! replied the rider. Nay, but that is *too* moderate! rejoined my old friend. Only three guineas for *selling* a thousand copies of a work in two volumes? O, Sir! (cries the young traveller,) you have mistaken the word. There have been none of them *sold;* they have been sent back from London long ago; and this £3 3*s*. is for the *cellaridge*, or warehouse-room in our book *cellar*. The work was in consequence preferred from the ominous cellar of the publisher to the author's garret; and on presenting a copy to an acquaintance, the old gentleman used to tell the anecdote with great humour, and still greater good nature.

With equal lack of worldly knowledge, I was a far more than equal sufferer for it, at the very outset of my authorship. Toward the close of the first year from the time that, in an inauspicious hour, I left the friendly cloisters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honoured Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry Philanthropists and Anti-polemists, to set on foot a periodical work, entitled THE WATCHMAN, that (according to the general motto of the work) *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only FOUR PENCE. Accordingly, with a flaming prospectus, "*Knowledge is Power,*"

&c. to try the state of the political atmosphere, and so forth, I set off on a tour to the north, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon might be seen on me. For I was at that time, and long after, though a Trinitarian (i. e. ad normam Platonis) in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a *psilanthropist*, one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were, indeed, in many and most important points, erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself, then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of (what I believed to be) the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm, I did not think of *myself* at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face *κατ' ἐμφασιν*! I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, *pingui nitescent*, cut in a strait line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eye brows, that looked like a scorched *after-math* from a last week's shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of colour and lustre, with the coarse yet glib cordage, that I suppose he called his hair, and which, with a *bend* inward at the nape of the neck, (the only approach to flexure in his whole figure,) slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance, lank, dark, very *hard*, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a *used* gridiron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the *thorough bred*, a true lover of liberty, and (I was informed) had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in the Revelations, *that spoke like a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first *stroke* in the new business I had underta-

ken of an author, yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion, after some imperfect sentences, and a multitude of hums and haas, abandoned the cause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros, the tallow chandler, varying my notes through the whole gamut of eloquence, from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophecied; and beginning with the captivity of nations, I ended with the near approach of the millenium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state, out of *the Religious Musings:*

> ——————————Such delights,
> As float to earth, permitted visitants!
> When in some hour of solemn jubilee
> The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
> Wide open: and forth come in fragments wild
> Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
> And odours snatch'd from beds of Amaranth,
> And they that from the chrystal river of life
> Spring up on freshen'd wings, ambrosial gales!
>
> *Religious Musings*, l. 356.

My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though (as I was afterwards told on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial) it was a *melting* day with him. And what, Sir, (he said, after a short pause) might the cost be? *Only* FOUR-PENCE, (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal bathos of that *four-pence!*) *only four-pence, Sir, each number, to be published on every eighth day.* That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much did you say there was to be for the money? *Thirty-two pages, Sir! large octavo, closely printed.* Thirty and two pages! Bless me! why, except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that's more than I ever reads, Sir, all the year round! I am as great a one, as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty and truth, and all them sort of things, but as to this, (no offence, I hope, Sir!) I must beg to be excused.

So ended my first canvas; from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester, to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and having perused it,

measured me from head to foot, and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing; I presented my prospectus to him; he rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then, most deliberately and *significantly* rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and, lastly, putting it into his pocket, turned his back on me with an "*over-run* with these articles!" and so, without another syllable, retired into his counting-house; and, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

This, I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner, he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other illuminati of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my life time, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing, too, that it was of a yellow colour, (not forgetting the lamentable difficulty I have always experienced in saying no! and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing,) I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bowl with salt. I was soon, however, compelled to resign it in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which, as I had drank but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement, but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing room, and opened a small pacquet of letters, which he had received from Bristol for me, ere I sunk back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately, I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, *deathly* pale, and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while, one after another, there dropt in the different gentlemen who had been invited to meet and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of to-

bacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment, one of the gentlemen began the conversation, with "*Have you seen a paper to-day, Mr. Coleridge?*" Sir! (I replied, rubbing my eyes,) "I am far from convinced, that a Christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest. This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or, rather, incongruous with, the purpose for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced an involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom, indeed, have I passed so many delightful hours, as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of that laugh to an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party, have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information, and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards, they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me, in the most friendly, and yet most flattering expressions, that the employment was neither fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet if I had determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvas by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and, (that failing,) the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, indeed, at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me, how opposite even then my principles were to those of jacobinism, or even of democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the 10th and 11th numbers of THE FRIEND.

From this rememberable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of the Watchman; yet more than half convinced, that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it; for I was at that period of my life so completely hag-ridden by the fear of being

influenced by selfish motives, that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of *prudence*, was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings, that the contrary was the dictate of *duty*. Accordingly, I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills, in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which (I have been informed, for I did not see them myself) eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But, alas! the publication of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number, an essay against fast days, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and Democratic patrons; for disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *philosophy;* and perhaps thinking, that charity ought to begin nearest home; instead of abusing the Government and the Aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected of me, I levelled my attacks at "*modern patriotism*," and even ventured to declare my belief, that whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition (or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gagging*) bills, yet, the bills themselves would produce an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects, the principles of which they had never bottomed, and from "pleading to the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading *for* them." At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education, and a concurring spread of the gospel, were the indispensable condition of any true political amelioration. Thus, by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification (but why should I say this, when, in truth, I cared too little for any thing that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropt the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling; he was a ——— and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after such delays as rendered that little worth nothing; and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month for a sum between eighty and ninety pounds, if the money had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend

who attached himself to me from my first arrival at Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, or a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favourers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence (for it was part of my political creed, that whoever ceased to act as an *individual* by making himself a member of any *society* not sanctioned by his government, forfeited the rights of a citizen)—a vehement anti-ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland a more vehement anti-gallican, and still more intensely an anti-jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly, that literature was not a profession by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself, that whatever my talents might or might not be in other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equi-distant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness; la, Sir! (replied poor Nanny,) why, it is only "WATCHMEN."

I now devoted myself to poetry and to the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of Hartley's Essays on Man, that I gave his name to my first born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbour, whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighborhood of one, to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man. His conversation extended to almost all subjects, except physics and politics; with the latter he

never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy *sycophants* * of that day (I here use the word sycophant in its original sense, as a wretch who *flatters* the prevailing party by *informing* against his neighbours, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited *figs* or fancies! for the moral application of the term it matters not which)—one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the *politics* of the neighbourhood, uttered the following *deep* remark: "As to *Coleridge*, there is not so much harm in *him*, for he is a whirlbrain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that ———! he is the *dark* traitor. *You never heard* HIM *say a syllable on the subject.*"

Now that the hand of Providence has disciplined *all* Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings, it will with difficulty be credited, how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation, (the too constant attendant on party zeal!) during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Addington administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partizans, exhausted by excess of stimulation, and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost we may say, of humiliating sacrifices; and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity, unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth; and Providence, never wanting to a good work when men have done

* Συκης φαινειν, to show or detect figs, the exportation of which, from Attica, was forbidden by the laws.

their parts, soon provided a common focus in the cause of Spain, which made us all once more Englishmen, by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties. The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom; while the *honest* zealots of the people could not but admit that freedom itself assumed a more winning form, humanized by loyalty, and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts, who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears, now disciplined by the succeeding storms, and sobered by increase of years, had been taught to prize and honour the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute prerequisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain, too, disappointment has nipt our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk to *kern* well; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican *blight* on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their wolvish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove all the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to *us* heaven has been just and gracious. The *people* of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted, by all ranks, to have been the main agents of our success. "*We fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.*" If, then, unanimity, grounded on moral feelings, has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of *principle*. For by these all *opinions* must be ultimately tried; and (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions) on the knowledge of these, all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of EDMUND

BURKE, at the commencement of the American war, and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the *principles* exactly the same, and the deductions the same; but the practical inferences almost opposite, in the one case, from those drawn in the other; yet in both equally legitimate, and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he this superiority of foresight? Whence arose the striking *difference*, and, in most instances, even the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by *him*, and by those who voted *with* him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of EDMUND BURKE are more interesting at the present day than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs that the same conclusion which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another, in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other? It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact, to attribute this difference to deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmund Burke possessed, and had sedulously sharpened, that eye which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the *laws* that determine their existence, and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to *principles*. He was a *scientific* statesman; and, therefore a *seer*. For every *principle* contains, in itself, the germs of a prophecy; and as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and (to men in general) the *only* test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful that

> ——————he went on refining,
> And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.

Our very sign boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence that there has been a TITIAN in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals

are so many remembrancers of EDMUND BURKE. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution, with the sentiments, and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the higher and from the literary classes, may not, like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher, occasioned by his CHARGE to the Wexford grand jury, and published in the *Courier*. Be this as it may, the evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the cerberean whelps of feud and slander no longer walk their rounds in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous quidnunc met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighbourhood, that a SPY was actually sent down from the government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but *variety* of these "honourable men," at the disposal of Ministers; for this proved a very honest fellow. After three weeks' truly Indian perseverance in tracking us, (for we were commonly together,) during all which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing, (and all the time utterly unsuspected: how, indeed, *could* such a suspicion enter our fancies?) he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together, behind a bank at the sea-side, (our favourite seat,) and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy Nozy*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was a man who had made a book, and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to

listen to *that*; but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me on the road; (this occurred as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage,) and passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked, of purpose, in a *democrat* way, in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of jacobinism, but (he added) I had "plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed, though he had only *put it on*." I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer; and so little did I suspect the true object of my "tempter ere accuser," that I expressed, with no small pleasure, my hope and belief that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident, therefore, prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which, through a friendly medium, came to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the *government gentleman* in his best manner, but, above all, to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and after the absolving suffrage of the *gentleman honoured with the confidence of ministers*, answered, as follows, to the following queries: D. Well, landlord! and what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister ———, my landlord, (*i. e. the owner of the house*,) and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford; but I never said a word to him, or he to me. D. But do you not know that he has distributed papers and hand-bills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your honour! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of his haranguing and talking to knots, and clusters of the inhabitants?—What are you grinning at, Sir? L. Beg your honour's pardon! but I was only thinking how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard be true, your honour! they would not have understood a word he said. When our vicar was here, Dr. L., the master of the great school, and canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister ——'s; and one of the farmers, that was there, told us that he and the doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together

after dinner. D. Answer the question, Sir! Does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope your honour a'nt angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your honour! I own, I have heard; I am sure I would not wish to say ill of any body; but it is certain that I have heard—D. Speak out, man! don't be afraid, you are doing your duty to your king and government. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your honour! as how that he is a *poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print; and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some *consarn* in the business. So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and, at the same time, entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life. I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of the TASK, that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on beyond the three or four first pages, and that throughout the poem the connexions are frequently aukward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply, in itself, a natural connexion to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of Bent, to the first break or fall, where its drops became audible, and it begins to form a channel; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered; to the sheep-fold, to the first cultivated plot of ground, to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath; to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the sea-port. My walks, therefore, were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombs. With my pencil and memorandum book in my hand, I was *making studies*, as the artists call them, and often moulding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem,

which was to have been entitled "THE BROOK." Had I finished the work, it was my purpose, in the heat of the moment, to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety, as containing the charts and maps, with which I was to have supplied the French government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these, too, for a tract of coast that, from Clevedon to Minehead, scarcely permits the approach of a fishing boat!

All my experience, from my first entrance into life to the present hour, is in favour of the warning maxim, that the man who opposes in toto the political or religious zealots of his age, is safer from their obloquy, than he who differs from them in one or two points, or, perhaps, only in degree. By that transfer of the feelings of private life into the discussion of public questions, which is the *queen bee* in the hive of party fanaticism, the partizan has more sympathy with an intemperate opposite than with a moderate friend. We now enjoy an intermission, and long may it continue! In addition to far higher and more important merits, our present bible societies, and other numerous associations for national or charitable objects, may serve perhaps to carry off the superfluous activity, and fervour of stirring minds in innocent hyperboles and the bustle of management. But the poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may, for a season, have subsided to its roots. At least, let us not be lulled into such a notion of our entire security, as not to keep watch and ward, even on our best feelings. I have seen gross intolerance shown in support of toleration; sectarian antipathy most obtrusively displayed in the promotion of an undistinguishing comprehension of sects; and acts of cruelty, (I had almost said of treachery,) committed in furtherance of an object vitally important to the cause of humanity; and all this by men, too, of naturally kind dispositions and exemplary conduct.

The magic rod of fanaticism is preserved in the very adyta of human nature; and needs only the re-exciting warmth of a master hand to bud forth afresh, and produce the old fruits. The horror of the peasant's war in Germany, and the direful effects of the Anabaptist's tenets, (which differed only from those of jacobinism by the substitution of theological for philosophical jargon,) struck all Europe for a time with affright. Yet little more than a century was sufficient to obliterate all effective memory of these events. The same principles, with similar, though less dreadful consequen-

ces, were again at work, from the imprisonment of the first Charles to the restoration of his son. The fanatic maxim of extirpating fanaticism by persecution, produced a civil war. The war ended in the victory of the insurgents; but the temper survived, and Milton had abundant grounds for asserting that "Presbyter was but OLD PRIEST writ large!" One good result, thank heaven! of this zealotry was the re-establishment of the church. And now it might have been hoped, that the mischievous spirit would have been bound for a season, "and a seal set upon him that he might deceive the nation no more." But no! The ball of persecution was taken up with undiminished vigour by the persecuted. The same fanatic principle, that under the solemn oath and covenant had turned cathedrals into stables, destroyed the rarest trophies of art and ancestral piety, and hunted the brightest ornaments of learning and religion into holes and corners, now marched under episcopal banners; and having first crowded the prisons of England, emptied its whole vial of wrath on the miserable covenanters of Scotland. (*Laing's* History of Scotland.—*Walter Scott's* Bard's Ballads, &c.) A merciful Providence at length constrained both parties to join against a common enemy. A wise government followed; and the established church became, and now is, not only the brightest example, but our best and only sure bulwark, of toleration! The true and indispensable bank against a new inundation of persecuting zeal—ESTO PERPETUA!

A long interval of quiet succeeded; or, rather, the exhaustion had produced a cold fit of the ague, which was symptomatized by indifference among the many, and a tendency to infidelity or scepticism in the educated classes. At length those feelings of disgust and hatred which, for a brief while, the multitude had attached to the crimes and absurdities of sectarian and democratic fanaticism, were transferred to the oppressive privileges of the noblesse, and the luxury, intrigues, and favoritism of the continental courts. The same principles, dressed in the ostentatious garb of a fashionable philosophy, once more rose triumphant, and effected the French revolution. And have we not, within the last three or four years, had reason to apprehend, that the detestable maxims and correspondent measures of the late French despotism had already bedimmed the public recollections of democratic phrenzy; had drawn off, to other objects, the electric force of the feelings which had

massed and upheld those recollections; and that a favourable concurrence of occasions was alone wanting to awaken the thunder, and precipitate the lightning, from the opposite quarter of the political heaven? (See THE FRIEND, p. 110.)

In part from constitutional indolence, which, in the very hey-dey of hope, I had kept my enthusiasm in check, but still more from the habits and influences of a classical education and academic pursuits, scarcely had a year elapsed from the commencement of my literary and political adventures, before my mind sunk into a state of thorough disgust and despondency, both with regard to the disputes and the parties disputant. With more than *poetic* feeling I exclaimed:

> "The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,
> Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
> They break their manacles, to wear the *name*
> Of freedom, graven on a heavier chain.
> O liberty! with profitless endeavour,
> Have I pursued thee many a weary hour;
> But thou nor swell'st the victor's pomp, nor ever
> Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power!
> Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee
> (Nor prayer nor boastful name delays thee)
> From superstition's harpy minions
> And factious blasphemy's obscener slaves,
> Thou speedest on thy cherub pinions,
> The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves!"
>
> FRANCE, *a Palinodia.*

I retired to a cottage in Somersetshire at the foot of Quantock, and devoted my thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals. Here I found myself all afloat. Doubts rushed in; broke upon me "*from the fountains of the great deep,*" and fell "*from the windows of heaven.*" The fontal truths of natural religion, and the books of Revelation, alike contributed to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat, and rested. The *idea* of the Supreme Being appeared to me to be as necessarily implied in all particular modes of being, as the idea of infinite space in all the geometrical figures by which space is limited. I was pleased with the Cartesian opinion, that the idea of God is distinguished from all other ideas by involving its *reality*; but I was not wholly satisfied. I began then to ask myself, what proof I had of

the outward *existence* of any thing? Of this sheet of paper, for instance, as a thing in itself, separate from the phænomenon or image in my perception. I saw, that in the nature of things, such proof is impossible; and that of all modes of being, that are not objects of the senses, the existence is *assumed* by a logical necessity arising from the constitution of the mind itself, by the absence of all motive to doubt it, not from any absolute contradiction in the supposition of the contrary. Still, the existence of a being, the ground of all existence, was not yet the existence of a moral creator and governor. "In the position, that all reality is either contained *in* the necessary being as an *attribute*, or exists *through* him, as its *ground*, it remains undecided whether the properties of intelligence and will are to be referred to the Supreme Being in the former, or only in the latter sense; as inherent attributes, or only as *consequences* that have existence in other things *through* him. Thus, organization and motion are regarded as *from* God, not *in* God. Were the latter the truth, then, notwithstanding all the pre-eminence which must be assigned to the ETERNAL FIRST from the sufficiency, unity, and independence of his being, as the dread ground of the universe, his nature would yet fall far short of that which we are bound to comprehend in the idea of GOD. For without any knowledge of determining resolve of its own, it would only be a blind necessary ground of other things and other spirits; and thus would be distinguished from the FATE of certain ancient philosophers in no respect, but that of being more definitely and intelligibly described." KANT's *einzig moglicher Beweisgrund: vermischte Schriften, Zweiter Band*, § 102 *and* 103.

For a very long time, indeed, I could not reconcile personality with infinity; and my head was with Spinoza, though my whole heart remained with Paul and John. Yet there had dawned upon me, even before I had met with the Critique of the Pure Reason, a certain guiding light. If the mere intellect could make no certain discovery of a holy and intelligent first cause, it might yet supply a demonstration, that no legitimate argument could be drawn from the intellect *against* its truth. And what is this more than St. Paul's assertion, that by wisdom (more properly translated, by the powers of reasoning) no man ever arrived at the knowledge of God? What more than the sublimest, and, probably, the oldest book on earth, has taught us?

Silver and gold man searcheth out:
Bringeth the ore out of the earth, and darkness into light.

But where findeth he wisdom?
Where is the place of understanding?

The abyss crieth: it is not in me!
Ocean echoeth back: not in me!

Whence then cometh wisdom?
Where dwelleth understanding?

Hidden from the eyes of the living;
Kept secret from the fowls of heaven!

Hell and death answer:
We have heard the rumour thereof from afar.

GOD marketh out the road to it;
GOD knoweth its abiding place!

He beholdeth the ends of the earth;
He surveyeth what is beneath the heavens!

And as he weighed out the winds, and measured the sea,
And appointed laws to the rain,
And a path to the thunder,
A path to the flashes of the lightning!

Then did he see it,
And he counted it;
He searched into the depth thereof,
And with a line did he compass it round!

But to man he said,
The fear of the Lord is wisdom for THEE!
And to avoid evil,
That is *thy* understanding.

JOB, CHAP. 28th.

I became convinced, that religion, as both the corner-stone and the key-stone of morality, must have a *moral* origin; so far at least, that the evidence of its doctrines could not, like the truths of abstract science, be wholly independent of the will. It were therefore to be expected, that its *fundamental* truth would be such as MIGHT be denied; though only by the *fool*, and even by the fool from the madness of the *heart* alone!

The question then concerning our faith in the existence of a God, not only as the *ground* of the universe by his essence, but as its maker and judge by his wisdom and holy will, appeared to stand thus: The sciential *reason*, whose objects are purely theoretical,

remains neutral, as long as its name and semblance are not usurped by the opponents of the doctrine. But it *then* becomes an effective ally by exposing the false show of demonstration, or by evincing the equal demonstrability of the contrary from premises equally logical. The *understanding* mean time suggests, the analogy of *experience* facilitates, the belief. Nature excites and recalls it, as by a perpetual revelation. Our feelings almost necessitate it; and the law of conscience peremptorily commands it. The arguments, that at all apply to it, are in its favour; and there is nothing against it, but its own sublimity. It could not be intellectually more evident without becoming morally less effective; without counteracting its own end, by sacrificing the *life* of faith to the cold mechanism of a worthless, because compulsory assent. The belief of a God and a future state (if a passive acquiescence may be flattered with the name of *belief*) does not indeed always beget a good heart; but a good heart so naturally begets the belief, that the very few exceptions must be regarded as strange anomalies from strange and unfortunate circumstances.

From these premises I proceeded to draw the following conclusions: First, that having once fully admitted the existence of an infinite yet self-conscious Creator, we are not allowed to ground the irrationality of any other article of faith on arguments which would equally prove that to be irrational which we had allowed to be *real*. Secondly, that whatever is deducible from the admission of a *self-comprehending* and *creative* spirit, may be legitimately used in proof of the *possibility* of any further mystery concerning the divine nature. *Possibilitatem*, mysteriorum, (Trinitatis, &c.,) contra insultus Infidelium et Hereticorum a contradictionibus vindico; haud quidem *veritatem*, quæ revelatione sola stabiliri possit; says LEIBNITZ, in a letter to his Duke. He then adds the following just and important remark: "In vain will tradition or texts of scripture be adduced in support of a doctrine, donec clava impossibilitatis et contradictionis e manibus horum Herculum extorta fuerit. For the heretic will still reply, that texts, the literal sense of which is not so much *above* as directly *against* all reason, must be understood *figuratively*, as Herod is a fox, &c."

These principles I held, *philosophically*, while, in respect of revealed religion, I remained a zealous Unitarian. I considered the *idea* of the Trinity a fair scholastic inference from the being of God,

as a creative intelligence; and that it was, therefore, entitled to the rank of an *esoteric* doctrine of natural religion. But seeing in the same no practical or moral bearing, I confined it to the schools of philosophy. The admission of the logos, as *hypostasized*, (i. e. neither a mere attribute or a personification,) in no respect removed my doubts concerning the incarnation and the redemption by the cross; which I could neither reconcile *in reason* with the impassiveness of the Divine Being, nor, in my moral feelings, with the sacred distinction between things and persons, the vicarious payment of a debt, and the vicarious expiation of guilt. A more thorough revolution in my philosophic principles, and a deeper insight into my own heart, were yet wanting. Nevertheless, I cannot doubt, that the difference of my metaphysical notions from those of Unitarians in general, contributed to my final re-conversion to the whole truth in Christ; even as, according to his own confession, the books of certain Platonic philosophers, (*libri quorundam Platonicorum*,) commenced the rescue of St. Augustine's faith from the same error, aggravated by the far darker accompaniment of the Manichæan heresy.

While my mind was thus perplexed, by a gracious Providence, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, the generous and munificent patronage of Mr. JOSIAH, and Mr. THOMAS WEDGEWOOD, enabled me to finish my education in Germany. Instead of troubling others with my own crude notions and juvenile compositions, I was thenceforward better employed in attempting to store my own head with the wisdom of others. I made the best use of my time and means; and there is, therefore, no period of my life on which I can look back with such unmingled satisfaction. After acquiring a tolerable sufficiency in the German language* at

*To those who design to acquire the language of a country in the country itself, it may be useful if I mention the incalculable advantage which I derived from learning all the words that could possibly be so learnt, with the objects before me, and without the intermediation of the English terms. It was a regular part of my morning studies, for the first six weeks of my residence at Ratzeburg, to accompany the good and kind old pastor with whom I lived, from the cellar to the roof, through gardens, farm yards, &c., and to call every, the minutest, thing by its German name. Advertisements, farces, jest books, and the conversation of children while I was at play with them, contributed their share to a more homelike acquaintance with the language than I could have acquired from works of polite literature alone, or even from polite society. There is a passage of *hearty* sound sense in Luther's German letter on interpretation, to the translation of which I shall prefix, for the sake of those who read the German, yet are not likely to have dipt often in the massive folios of this heroic reformer, the simple, sinewy, idiomatic words of the original: "Denn man muss nicht die Buchstaben in der Lateinischen Sprache fragen wie man soll Deutsch reden; sondern man

Ratzeburg, which, with my voyage and journey thither, I have described in THE FRIEND, I proceeded through Hanover to Gottingen.

Here I regularly attended the lectures on physiology in the morning, and on natural history in the evening, under BLUMENBACH, a name as dear to every Englishman who has studied at that university, as it is venerable to men of science throughout Europe! Eichhorn's lectures on the New Testament were repeated to me from notes, by a student from Ratzeburg, a young man of sound learning and indefatigable industry; who is now, I believe, a professor of the oriental languages at Heidelberg. But my chief efforts were directed towards a grounded knowledge of the German language and literature. From professor TYCHSEN, I received as many lessons in the Gothic of Ulphilas as sufficed to make me acquainted with its grammar, and the radical words of most frequent occurrence; and with the occasional assistance of the same philosophical linguist, I read through OTTFRIED's * metrical paraphrase

muss die mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf den Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markte, darum fragen: und denselbigen auf das Maul sehen wie sie reden, und darnach dollmetschen. So verstehen sie es denn, und merken dass man Deutsch mit ihnen redet."

TRANSLATION.

For one must not ask the letters in the Latin tongue, how one ought to speak German; but one must ask the mother in the house, the children in the lanes and alleys, the common man in the market, concerning this; yea, and look at the *moves* of their mouths while they are talking, and thereafter interpret. They understand you then, and mark that one talks German with them.

* This paraphrase, written about the time of Charlemagne, is by no means deficient in occasional passages of considerable poetic merit. There is a flow, and a tender enthusiasm in the following lines, (at the conclusion of Chapter V.) which even in the translation will not, I flatter myself, fail to interest the reader. Ottfried is describing the circumstances immediately following the birth of our Lord:

She gave with joy her virgin breast;
She hid it not, she bared the breast,
Which suckled that divinest babe!
Blessed, blessed were the breasts
Which the Saviour infant kiss'd;
And blessed, blessed was the mother
Who wrapp'd his limbs in swaddling clothes,
Singing placed him on her lap,
Hung o'er him with her looks of love,
And soothed him with a lulling motion.
Blessed! for she shelter'd him
From the damp and chilling air;
Blessed, blessed! for she lay
With such a babe in one blest bed,

of the gospel, and the most important remains of the THEOTISCAN, or the transitional state of the Teutonic language from the Gothic to the old German of the Swabian period. Of this period (the polished dialect of which is analogous to that of our Chaucer, and which leaves the philosophic student in doubt, whether the language has not since then lost more in sweetness and flexibility, than it has gained in condensation and copiousness) I read with sedulous accuracy the MINNESINGER, (or singers of love, the provencal poets of the Swabian court,) and the metrical romances; and then laboured through sufficient specimens of the *master singers*, their degenerate successors; not, however, without occasional pleasure from the rude yet interesting strains of HANS SACHS, the cobler of Nuremberg. Of this man's genius, five folio volumes, with double columns, are extant in print, and nearly an equal number in manuscript; yet, the indefatigable bard takes care to inform his readers, that he never *made a shoe the less*, but had virtuously reared a large family by the labour of his hands.

In Pindar, Chaucer, Dante, Milton, &c. &c. we have instances of the close connexion of poetic genius with the love of liberty and of genuine reformation. The *moral* sense at least will not be outraged, if I add to the list the name of this honest shoemaker; (a trade, by the bye, remarkable for the production of philosophers and poets.) His poem entitled the MORNING STAR, was the very first publication that appeared in praise and support of LUTHER; and an excellent hymn of Hans Sachs', which has been deservedly translated into almost all the European languages, was commonly sung in the Protestant churches, whenever the heroic reformer visited them.

Close as babes and mothers lie!
Blessed, blessed evermore;
With her virgin lips she kiss'd,
With her arms, and to her breast
She embraced the babe divine,
Her babe divine the virgin mother!
There lives not on this ring of earth
A mortal, that can sing her praise.
Mighty mother, virgin pure,
In the darkness and the night
For us she *bore* the heavenly Lord!

Most interesting is it to consider the effect, when the feelings are wrought above the natural pitch by the belief of something mysterious, while all the images are purely natural. Then it is that religion and poetry strike deepest.

In Luther's own German writings, and eminently in his translation of the bible, the *German* language commenced. I mean the language, as it is at present *written*; that which is called the HIGH GERMAN, as contra-distinguished from the PLATT-TEUTSCH, the dialect of the flat or northern countries, and from the OBER-TEUTSCH, the language of the middle and southern Germany. The High German is indeed a *lingua communis* not actually the native language of any province, but the choice and fragrancy of all the dialects. From this cause it is at once the most copious and the most grammatical of all the European tongues.

Within less than a century after Luther's death, the German was inundated with pedantic barbarisms. A few volumes of this period I read through from motives of curiosity; for it is not easy to imagine any thing more fantastic than the very appearance of their pages. Almost every third word is a Latin word, with a Germanized ending; the Latin portion being always printed in Roman letters, while in the last syllable the German character is retained.

At length, about the year 1620, OPITZ arose, whose genius more nearly resembled that of Dryden than any other poet, who at present occurs to my recollection. In the opinion of LESSING, the most acute of critics, and of ADELUNG, the first of lexicographers, Opitz, and the Silesian poets, his followers, not only restored the language, but still remain the models of pure diction. A stranger has no vote on such a question; but after repeated perusals of the work, my feelings justified the verdict, and I seemed to have acquired from them a sort of *tact* for what is *genuine* in the style of later writers.

Of the splendid era which commenced with Gellert, Klopstock, Ramler, Lessing, and their compeers, I need not speak. With the opportunities which I enjoyed, it would have been disgraceful not to have been familiar with their writings; and I have already said as much as the present biographical sketch requires concerning the German philosophers, whose works, for the greater part, I became acquainted with at a far later period.

Soon after my return from Germany, I was solicited to undertake the literary and political department in the Morning Post; and I acceded to the proposal, on the condition that the paper should, thenceforward, be conducted on certain fixed and announced principles, and that I should be neither obliged or requested to deviate

from them, in favour of any party or any event. In consequence, that Journal became, and for many years continued, *anti-ministerial* indeed; yet, with a very qualified approbation of the opposition, and with far greater earnestness and zeal, both anti-jacobin and anti-gallican. To this hour, I cannot find reason to approve of the first war, either in its commencement or its conduct. Nor can I understand with what reason, either Mr. Percival, (whom I am singular enough to regard as the best and wisest minister of this reign,) or the present administration, can be said to have pursued the plans of Mr. PITT. The love of their country, and perseverant hostility to French principles and French ambition are, indeed, honourable qualities, common to them and to their predecessors. But it appears to me as clear as the evidence of facts can render any question of history, that the successes of the Percival and of the existing ministry, have been owing to their having pursued measures the direct contrary to Mr. Pitt's. Such, for instance, are the concentration of the national force to one object; the abandonment of the *subsidizing* policy, so far, at least, as neither to goad or bribe the continental courts into war, till the convictions of their subjects had rendered it a war of their own seeking; and above all, in their manly and generous reliance on the good sense of the English people, and on that loyalty which is linked to the very heart * of the nation, by the system of credit, and the interdependence of property.

* Lord Grenville has lately re-asserted, (in the House of Lords,) the imminent danger of a revolution in the earlier part of the war against France. I doubt not that his Lordship is sincere; and it must be flattering to his feelings to believe it. But where are the evidences of the danger, to which a future historian can appeal? Or must he rest on an assertion? Let me be permitted to extract a passage on the subject from THE FRIEND. "I have said that to withstand the arguments of the lawless, the anti-jacobins proposed to suspend the law, and by the interposition of a particular statute, to eclipse the blessed light of the universal sun, that spies and informers might tyrannize and escape in the ominous darkness. Oh! if these mistaken men, intoxicated and bewildered with the panic of property, which they themselves were the chief agents in exciting, had ever lived in a country where there really existed a general disposition to change and rebellion! Had they ever travelled through Sicily; or through France at the first coming on of the revolution; or even, alas! through too many of the provinces of a sister island, they could not but have shrunk from their own declarations concerning the state of feeling, an opinion at that time predominant throughout Great Britain. There was a time, (heaven grant that that time may have passed by!) when, by crossing a narrow strait, they might have learnt the true symptoms of approaching danger, and have secured themselves from mistaking the meetings and idle rant of such sedition, as shrunk appalled from the sight of a constable, for the dire murmuring and strange consternation which precedes the storm or earthquake of national discord. Not only in coffee-houses and public theatres, but even at the tables of the wealthy, they would have heard the advocates of existing government defend their cause in the language, and with the tone of men, who are conscious that they are in a minority. But in England,

Be this as it may, I am persuaded that the Morning Post proved a far more useful ally to the government in its most important objects, in consequence of its being generally considered as moderately anti-ministerial, than if it had been the avowed eulogist of Mr. Pitt. (The few, whose curiosity or fancy should lead them to turn over the Journals of that date, may find a small proof of this in the frequent charges made by the Morning Chronicle, that such and such essays or leading paragraphs had been sent from the treasury.) The rapid and unusual increase in the sale of the Morning Post, is a sufficient pledge that genuine impartiality, with a respectable portion of literary talent, will secure the success of a newspaper, without the aid of party or ministerial patronage. But by impartiality I mean an honest and enlightened adherence to a code of intelligible principles, previously announced, and faithfully referred to, in support of every judgment on men and events; not indiscriminate abuse, not the indulgence of an editor's own malignant passions; and still less, if that be possible, a determination to make money by flattering the envy and cupidity, the vindictive restlessness and self-conceit of the half-witted vulgar; a determination almost fiendish, but which, I have been informed, has been boastfully avowed by one man, the most notorious of these *mob-sycophants!* From the commencement of the Addington administra-

when the alarm was at its highest, there was not a city, no, not a town or village, in which a man suspected of holding democratic principles could move abroad without reciving some unpleasant proof of the hatred in which his supposed opinions were held by the great majority of the people; and the only instances of popular excess and indignation, were in favour of the government and the established church. But why need I appeal to these invidious facts? Turn over the pages of history, and seek for a single instance of a revolution having been effected without the concurrence of either the nobles, or the ecclesiastics, or the monied classes, in any country in which the influences of property had ever been predominant, and where the interests of the proprietors were interlinked! Examine the revolution of the Belgic provinces under Philip 2nd; the civil wars of France in the preceding generation; the history of the American revolution, or the yet more recent events in Sweden and in Spain; and it will be scarcely possible not to perceive, that in England, from 1791 to the peace of Amiens, there were neither tendencies to confederacy, nor actual confederacies, against which the existing laws had not provided sufficient safeguards and an ample punishment. But alas! the panic of property had been struck, in the first instance, for party purposes; and when it became general, its propagators caught it themselves, and ended in believing their own lie; even as our bulls in Borrowdale sometimes run mad with the echo of their own bellowing. The consequences were most injurious. Our attention was concentrated to a monster, which could not survive the convulsions in which it had been brought forth: even the enlightened Burke himself, too often talking and reasoning, as if a perpetual and organized anarchy had been a possible thing! Thus, while we were warring against French doctrines, we took little heed whether the means, by which we attempted to overthrow them, were not likely to aid and augment the far more formidable evil of French ambition. Like children, we ran away from the yelping of a cur, and took shelter at the heels of a vicious war-horse."

tion to the present day, whatever I have written in the MORNING POST, or, (after that paper was transferred to other proprietors,) in the COURIER, has been in defence or furtherance of the measures of government.

> Things of this nature scarce survive the night
> That gives them birth; they perish in the sight,
> Cast by so far from *after-life*, that there
> Can scarcely aught be said, but that *they were!*
>
> CARTWRIGHT'S *Prol. to the Royal Slave.*

Yet in these labours I employed, and, in the belief of partial friends, wasted, the prime and manhood of my intellect. Most assuredly, they added nothing to my fortune or my reputation. The industry of the week supplied the necessities of the week. From Government or the friends of Government I not only never received remuneration, or even expected it; but I was never honoured with a single acknowledgment, or expression of satisfaction. Yet the retrospect is far from painful or matter of regret. I am not indeed silly enough to take, as any thing more than a violent hyperbole of party debate, Mr. Fox's assertion, that the *late* war (I trust that the epithet is not prematurely applied) *was a war produced by the* MORNING POST; or I should be proud to have the words inscribed on my tomb. As little do I regard the circumstance, that I was a specified object of Bonaparte's resentment during my residence in Italy, in consequence of those essays in the Morning Post, during the peace of Amiens. (Of this I was warned, *directly*, by Baron VON HUMBOLDT, the Prussian Plenipotentiary, who at that time was the minister of the Prussian court at Rome; and indirectly, through his secretary, Cardinal Fesch himself.) Nor do I lay any greater weight on the confirming fact, that an order for my arrest was sent from Paris, from which danger I was rescued by the kindness of a noble Benedictine, and the gracious connivance of that good old man, the present Pope. For the late tyrant's vindictive appetite was omnivorous, and preyed equally on a Duc D'Enghien,* and the writer of a newspaper para-

*I seldom think of the murder of this illustrious Prince without recollecting the lines of Valerius Flaccus (Argonaut. Lib. I. 30.)

> ——————Super ipsius ingens
> Instat fama viri, virtusque haud læta Tyranno;
> Ergo ante ire metus, juvenemque extinguere pergit.

graph. Like a true vulture,* Napoleon, with an eye not less telescopic, and with a taste equally coarse in his ravin, could descend from the most dazzling heights to pounce on the leveret in the brake, or even on the field mouse amid the grass. But I do derive a gratification from the knowledge, that my essays contributed to introduce the practice of placing the questions and events of the day in a moral point of view; in giving a dignity to particular measures, by tracing their policy or impolicy to permanent principles; and an interest to principles by the application of them to individual measures. In Mr. Burke's writings, indeed, the germs of almost all political truths may be found. But I dare assume to myself the merit of having first explicitly defined and analized the nature of Jacobinism; and that in distinguishing the jacobin from the republican, the democrat and the mere demagogue, I both rescued the word from remaining a mere term of abuse, and put on their guard many honest minds, who even in their heat of zeal against jacobinism, admitted or supported principles from which the worst parts of that system may be legitimately deduced. That these are not necessary *practical* results of such principles, we owe to that fortunate inconsequence of our nature, which permits the heart to rectify the errors of the understanding. The detailed examination of the consular government and its pretended constitution, and the proof given by me, that it was a consummate despotism in masquerade, extorted a recantation even from the Morning Chronicle, which had previously extolled this constitution as the perfection of a wise and regulated liberty. On every great occurrence, I endeavoured to discover in past history the event that most nearly resembled it. I procured, wherever it was possible, the contemporary historians, memorialists, and pamphleteers. Then fairly subtracting the points of difference from those of likeness, as the balance favoured the former or the latter, I conjectured that the result would be the same or different. In the series of essays,† entitled, "a comparison of

* Θηρᾶ δὲ κᾆι τὸν χῆνα καὶ τὴν Δορκάδα,
Καὶ τὸν Λαγωὸν, καὶ τὸ τῶν Ταὼρων γένος.

PHILE *de animal. propriet.*

† A small selection from the numerous articles furnished by me to the Morning Post and Courier, chiefly as they regarded the sources and effects of jacobinism, and the connection of certain systems of political economy with jacobinical despotism, will form part of "THE FRIEND," which I am now completing, and which

France under Napoleon with Rome under the first Cæsars," and in those which followed "on the probable final restoration of the Bourbons," I feel myself authorized to affirm, by the effect produced on many intelligent men, that were the dates wanting, it might have been suspected that the essays had been written within the last twelve months. The same plan I pursued at the commencement of the Spanish revolution, and with the same success, taking the war of the United Provinces with Philip 2nd, as the ground work of the comparison. I have mentioned this from no motives of vanity, nor even from motives of self-defence, which would justify a certain degree of egotism, especially if it be considered how often and grossly I have been attacked for sentiments which I had exerted my best powers to confute and expose, and how grievously these charges acted to my disadvantage while I was in Malta. Or, rather, they would have done so, if my own feelings had not precluded the wish of a settled establishment in that island. But I have mentioned it from the full persuasion that, armed with the two-fold knowledge of history and the human mind, a man will scarcely err in his judgment concerning the sum total of any future national event, if he have been able to procure the original documents of the past, together with authentic accounts of the present, and if he have a philosophic tact for what is truly important in facts, and in most instances, therefore, for such facts as the DIGNITY OF HISTORY has excluded from the volumes of our modern compilers, by the courtesy of the age, entitled historians.

To have lived in vain must be a painful thought to any man, and especially so to him who has made literature his profession. I should therefore rather condole, than be angry, with the mind which could attribute to no worthier feelings than those of vanity or self-love, the satisfaction which I acknowledge to have enjoyed from the re-publication of my political essays (either whole or as extracts) not only in many of our own provincial papers, but in the federal journals throughout America. I regarded it as some proof of my not having laboured altogether in vain, that from the articles written by me shortly before, and at the commencement of the late unhappy

will be shortly published, for I can scarcely say re-published, with the numbers arranged in Chapters according to their subjects.

Accipe principium rursus, corpusque *coactum*
Desere; mutata melior procede figura.

war with America, not only the sentiments were adopted, but, in some instances, the very language, in several of the Massachusetts state-papers.

But no one of these motives, nor all conjointly, would have impelled me to a statement so uncomfortable to my own feelings, had not my character been repeatedly attacked, by an unjustifiable intrusion on private life, as of a man incorrigibly idle, and who, intrusted not only with ample talents, but favoured with unusual opportunities of improving them, had nevertheless suffered them to rust away without any efficient exertion either for his own good or that of his fellow creatures. Even if the compositions which I have made public, and that too in a form the most certain of an extensive circulation, though the least flattering to an author's self-love, had been published in *books*, they would have filled a respectable number of volumes, though every passage of merely temporary interest were omitted. My prose writings have been charged with a disproportionate demand on the attention; with an excess of refinement in the mode of arriving at truths; with beating the ground for that which might have been run down by the eye; with the length and laborious construction of my periods; in short, with obscurity and the love of paradox. But my severest critics have not pretended to have found in my compositions triviality, or traces of a mind that shrunk from the toil of thinking. No one has charged me with tricking out in other words the thoughts of others, or with hashing up anew the crambe jam decies coctam of English literature or philosophy. Seldom have I written that in a day, the acquisition or investigation of which had not cost me the previous labour of a month.

But are books the only channel through which the stream of intellectual usefulness can flow? Is the diffusion of truth to be estimated by publications; or publications by the truth which they diffuse, or at least contain? I speak it in the excusable warmth of a mind stung by an accusation which has not only been advanced in reviews of the widest circulation, not only registered in the bulkiest works of periodical literature, but, by frequency of repetition, has become an admitted fact in private literary circles, and thoughtlessly repeated by too many who call themselves my friends, and whose own recollections ought to have suggested a contrary testimony. Would that the criterion of a scholar's utility were the

number and moral value of the truths which he has been the means of throwing into the general circulation; or the number and value of the minds, whom, by his conversation or letters, he has excited into activity, and supplied with the germs of their aftergrowth! A distinguished rank might not, indeed, even then, be awarded to my exertions, but I should dare look forward with confidence to an honourable acquittal. I should dare appeal to the numerous and respectable audiences which, at different times, and in different places, honoured my lecture-rooms with their attendance, whether the points of view from which the subjects treated of were surveyed, whether the grounds of my reasoning were such as they had heard or read elsewhere, or have since found in previous publications. I can conscientiously declare, that the complete success of the REMORSE on the first night of its representation, did not give me as great or as heart-felt a pleasure, as the observation that the pit and boxes were crowded with faces familiar to me, though of individuals whose names I did not know, and of whom I knew nothing, but that they had attended one or other of my courses of lectures. It is an excellent, though perhaps somewhat vulgar proverb, that there are cases where a man may be as well "*in for a pound as for a penny.*" To those, who from ignorance of the serious injury I have received from this rumour of having dreamt away my life to no purpose, injuries which I unwillingly remember at all, much less am disposed to record in a sketch of my literary life; or to those, who from their own feelings, or the gratification they derive from thinking contemptuously of others, would, like Job's comforters, attribute these complaints, extorted from me by the sense of wrong, to self-conceit or presumptuous vanity, I have already furnished such ample materials, that I shall gain nothing by withholding the remainder. I will not, therefore, hesitate to ask the consciences of those, who, from their long acquaintance with me and with the circumstances, are best qualified to decide, or be my judges, whether the restitution of the suum cuique would increase or detract from my literary reputation. In this exculpation, I hope to be understood as speaking of myself comparatively, and in proportion to the claims which others are entitled to make on my time or my talents. By what I *have* effected, am I to be judged by my fellow men; what I *could* have done, is a question for my own conscience. On my own account I may perhaps have had sufficient

reason to lament my deficiency in self-controul, and the neglect of concentreing my powers to the realization of some permanent work. But to verse rather than to prose, if to either, belongs the voice of mourning; for

> Keen pangs of love awakening as a babe,
> Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart,
> And fears self-will'd that shunn'd the eye of hope,
> And hope that scarce would know itself from fear;
> Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
> And genius given and knowledge won in vain,
> And all which I had cull'd in wood-walks wild,
> And all which patient toil had rear'd, and all
> Commune with thee had open'd out—but flowers
> Strew'd on my corpse, and borne upon my bier
> In the same coffin, for the self same grave! S. T. C.

These will exist, for the future, I trust, only in the poetic strains which the feelings at the time called forth. In those only, gentle reader,

> Affectus animi varios, bellumque sequacis
> Perlegis invidiæ; curasque revolvis inanes;
> Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo.
> Perlegis et lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acuta
> Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus.
> OMNIA PAULATIM CONSUMIT LONGIOR ÆTAS
> VIVENDOQUE SIMUL MORIMUR RAPIMURQUE MANENDO.
> Ipse mihi collatus enim non ille videbor;
> Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,
> Vox aliudque sonat. Jamque observatio vitæ
> Multa dedit:—lugere nihil, ferre omnia; jamque
> Paulatim lacrymas rerum experientia tersit.

CHAPTER XI.

An affectionate exhortation to those who in early life feel themselves disposed to become authors.

It was a favourite remark of the late Mr. Whitbread, that no man does any thing from a single motive. The separate motives, or, rather, moods of mind, which produced the preceding reflections and anecdotes have been laid open to the reader in each separate instance. But, an interest in the welfare of those who, at the present time, may be in circumstances not dissimilar to my own at my first entrance into life, has been the constant accompaniment, and, (as it were,) the under-song of all my feelings. Whitehead, exerting the prerogative of his laureatship, addressed to youthful poets a poetic CHARGE, which is perhaps the best, and certainly the most interesting of his works. With no other privilege than that of sympathy and sincere good wishes, I would address an affectionate exhortation to the youthful literati, grounded on my own experience. It will be but short; for the beginning, middle, and end, converge to one charge: NEVER PURSUE LITERATURE AS A TRADE. With the exception of one extraordinary man, I have never known an individual, least of all an individual of genius, healthy or happy without a *profession*, i. e. some *regular* employment which does not depend on the will of the moment, and which can be carried on so far *mechanically*, that an average quantum only of health, spirits, and intellectual exertion, are requisite to its faithful discharge. Three hours of leisure, unannoyed by any alien anxiety, and looked forward to with delight as a change and recreation, will suffice to realize in literature a larger product of what is truly *genial*, than weeks of compulsion. Money and immediate reputation, form only an arbitrary and accidental end of literary labour. The *hope* of increasing them by any given exertion, will often prove a stimulant to industry; but the *necessity* of acquiring them will, in all works of genius, convert the stimulant into a *narcotic*. Motives by excess reverse their very nature, and, instead of exciting, stun and stupify the mind. For it is one contradistinction of genius

from talent, that its predominant end is always comprised in the means; and this is one of the many points which establish an analogy between genius and virtue. Now, though talents may exist without genius, yet as genius cannot exist, certainly not manifest itself, without talents, I would advise every scholar who feels the genial power working within him, so far to make a division between the two, as that he should devote his *talents* to the acquirement of competence in some known trade or profession, and his genius to objects of his tranquil and unbiassed choice; while the consciousness of being actuated in both alike by the sincere desire to perform his duty, will alike ennoble both. My dear young friend, (I would say,) "suppose yourself established in any honourable occupation. From the manufactory, or counting house, from the law court, or from having visited your last patient, you return at evening,

> "Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of home
> Is sweetest——"

to your family, prepared for its social enjoyments, with the very countenances of your wife and children brightened, and their voice of welcome made doubly welcome by the knowledge that, as far as *they* are concerned, you have satisfied the demands of the day by the labour of the day. Then, when you retire into your study, in the books on your shelves, you re-visit so many venerable friends with whom you can converse. Your own spirit, scarcely less free from personal anxieties than the great minds that, in those books, are still living for you! Even your writing desk, with its blank paper, and all its other implements, will appear as a chain of flowers, capable of linking your feelings, as well as thoughts, to events and characters past or to come; not a chain of iron, which binds you down to think of the future, and the remote, by recalling the claims and feelings of the peremptory present. But why should I say *retire?* The habits of active life and daily intercourse with the stir of the world, will tend to give you such self-command, that the presence of your family will be no interruption. Nay, the social silence or undisturbing voices of a wife or sister, will be like a restorative atmosphere, or soft music, which moulds a dream without becoming its object. If facts are required, to prove the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment, the works of Cicero and Xenophon among

the ancients, of Sir Thomas Moore, Bacon, Baxter, or, to refer, at once, to later and contemporary instances, DARWIN and ROSCOE, are at once decisive of the question.

But all men may not dare promise themselves a sufficiency of self-controul for the imitation of those examples; though strict scrutiny should always be made, whether indolence, restlessness, or a vanity impatient for immediate gratification, have not tampered with the judgment, and assumed the vizard of humility, for the purposes of self-delusion. Still the church presents to every man of learning and genius a profession, in which he may cherish a rational hope of being able to unite the widest schemes of literary utility with the strictest performance of professional duties. Among the numerous blessings of christianity, the introduction of an established church makes an especial claim on the gratitude of scholars and philosophers; in England, at least, where the principles of protestantism have conspired with the freedom of the government, to double all its salutary powers by the removal of its abuses.

That not only the maxims, but the grounds of a pure morality—the mere fragments of which,

> "——— the lofty grave tragedians taught
> In chorus or iambic, teachers best
> Of moral prudence, with delight received
> In brief sententious precepts;"
>
> PARADISE REGAINED.

and that the sublime truths of the divine unity and attributes, which a Plato found most hard to learn, and deemed it still more difficult to reveal; that these should have become the almost hereditary property of childhood and poverty, of the hovel and the workshop; that, even to the unlettered, they sound as *common place*, is a phenomenon, which must withhold all but minds of the most vulgar cast from undervaluing the services even of the pulpit and the reading desk. Yet those who confine the efficiency of an established church to its *public* offices, can hardly be placed in a much higher rank of intellect. That to every parish throughout the kingdom there is transplanted a germ of civilization; that in the remotest villages there is a nucleus, round which the capabilities of the place may crystallize and brighten; a model, sufficiently superior to excite, yet, sufficiently near to encourage and facilitate imitation;

this, the inobtrusive, continuous agency of a protestant church establishment, *this* it is, which the patriot and the philanthropist, who would fain unite the love of peace with the faith in the progressive amelioration of mankind, cannot estimate at too high a price. "It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies." The clergyman is with his parishioners, and among them; he is neither in the cloistered cell, or in the wilderness, but a neighbor and a family-man, whose education and rank admit him to the mansion of the rich land-holder, while his duties make him the frequent visiter of the farm-house and the cottage. He is, or he may become, connected with the families of his parish, or its vicinity, by marriage. And among the instances of the blindness, or at best, of the short-sightedness, which it is the nature of cupidity to inflict, I know few more striking than the clamours of the farmers against church property. Whatever was not paid to the clergymen, would inevitably at the next lease be paid to the land-holder; while, as the case at present stands, the revenues of the church are, in some sort, the reversionary property of every family, that may have a member educated for the church, or a daughter that may marry a clergyman. Instead of being *foreclosed* and immoveable, it is in fact the only species of landed property that is essentially moving and circulative. That there exist no inconveniences, who will pretend to assert? But I have yet to expect the proof, that the inconveniences are greater in this than in any other species; or, that either the farmers or the clergy would be benefitted by forcing the latter to become either *Trullibers* or salaried *placemen*. Nay, I do not hesitate to declare my firm persuasion, that whatever *reason* of discontent the farmers may assign, the true *cause* is this; that they may cheat the *parson*, but cannot cheat the steward; and they are disappointed, if they should have been able to withhold only two pounds less than the legal claim, having expected to withhold five. At all events, considered relatively to the encouragement of learning and genius, the establishment presents a patronage, at once so effective and unburthensome, that it would be impossible to afford the like, or equal, in any but a christian and protestant country. There is scarce a department of human knowledge, without some bearing on the various critical, historical, philosophical, and moral

truths, in which, the scholar must be interested as a clergyman; no one pursuit worthy of a man of genius, which may not be followed without incongruity. To give the history of the bible as a *book*, would be little less than to relate the origin, or first excitement, of all the literature and science that we now possess. The very decorum which the profession imposes, is favorable to the best purposes of genius, and tends to counteract its most frequent defects. Finally, that man must be deficient in sensibility, who would not find an incentive to emulation in the great and burning lights, which, in a long series have illustrated the church of England; who would not hear from within an echo to the voice from their sacred shrines,

"Et Pater Æneas et avunculus excitat Hector."

But, whatever be the profession or trade chosen, the advantages are many and important, compared with the state of a *mere* literary man, who, in any degree, depends on the sale of his works for the necessaries and comforts of life. In the former, a man lives in sympathy with the world in which he lives. At least, he acquires a better and quicker tact for the knowledge of that with which men in general can sympathize. He learns to manage his genius more prudently and efficaciously. His powers and acquirements gain him likewise more real admiration, for they surpass the legitimate expectations of others. He is something besides an author, and is not therefore considered merely as an author. The hearts of men are open to him, as to one of their own class; and whether he exerts himself or not in the conversational circles of his acquaintance, his silence is not attributed to pride, nor his communicativeness to vanity. To these advantages I will venture to add a superior chance of happiness in domestic life, were it only that it is as natural for the man to be out of the circle of his household during the day, as it is meritorius for the woman to remain for the most part within it. But this subject involves points of consideration so numerous and so delicate, and would not only permit, but require such ample documents from the biography of literary men, that I now merely allude to it *in transitu*. When the same circumstance has occurred at very different times to very different persons, all of whom have some one thing in common, there is reason to suppose that such circumstance is not merely attributable to the *persons* concerned, but is, in some measure, occasioned by the one point in

common to them all. Instead of the vehement and almost slanderous dehortation from marriage, which the *Misogyne*, Boccaccio (*Vita e Costumi* di Dante, p. 12. 16.) addresses to literary men, I would substitute the simple advice; be not *merely* a man of letters! Let literature be an honourable *augmentation* to your arms, but not constitute the coat, or fill the escutcheon!

To objections from conscience I can of course answer in no other way, than by requesting the youthful objector (as I have already done on a former occasion) to ascertain with strict self-examination, whether other influences may not be at work; whether spirits, "*not of health*," and with whispers "*not from heaven*," may not be walking in the *twilight* of his consciousness. Let him catalogue his scruples, and reduce them to a distinct intelligible form; let him be certain that he has read with a docile mind and favourable dispositions, the best and most fundamental works on the subject; that he has had both mind and heart opened to the great and illustrious qualities of the many renowned characters, who had doubted like himself, and whose researches had ended in the clear conviction, that their doubts had been groundless, or at least in no proportion to the counter-weight. Happy will it be for such a man, if, among his contemporaries elder than himself, he should meet with one, who with similar powers, and feelings as acute as his own, had entertained the same scruples; had acted upon them; and who, by after-research (when the step was, alas! irretrievable, but for that very reason his research undeniably disinterested) had discovered himself to have quarrelled with received opinions only to embrace errors, to have left the directions tracked out for him on the high road of honourable exertion, only to deviate into a labyrinth, where, when he had wandered, till his head was giddy, his best good fortune was finally to have found his way out again, too late for prudence, though not too late for conscience or for truth! Time spent in such delay is time won; for manhood in the mean time is advancing, and with it increase of knowledge, strength of judgment, and, above all, temperance of feelings. And even if these should effect no change, yet the delay will at least prevent the final approval of the decision from being alloyed by the inward censure of the rashness and vanity by which it had been precipitated. It would be a sort of irreligion, and scarcely less than a libel on human nature, to believe that there is any established and reputable profession or em-

ployment, in which a man may not continue to act with honesty and honour; and, doubtless, there is likewise none which may not at times, present temptations to the contrary. But wofully will that man find himself mistaken, who imagines that the profession of literature, or (to speak more plainly) the *trade* of authorship, besets its members with fewer or with less insidious temptations, than the church, the law, or the different branches of commerce. But I have treated sufficiently on this unpleasant subject in an early chapter of this volume. I will conclude the present, therefore, with a short extract from HERDER, whose name I might have added to the illustrious list of those who have combined the successful pursuit of the muses, not only with the faithful discharge, but with the highest honours and honourable emoluments of an established profession. The translation the reader will find in a note below.* "Am sorgf altigsten, meiden sie die Autorschaft. Zu fruh oder unmassig gebraucht, macht sie den Kopf wuste und das Herz leer; wenn sie auch sonst keine uble Folgen gabe. Ein Mensch, der nur lieset um zu druceken, lieset wahrscheinlich ubel; und wer jeden Gedanken, der ihm aufstosst, durch Feder und Presse versendet, hat sie in kurzer Zeit alle versandt, und wird bald ein blosser Diener der Druckerey, ein Buchstabensetzer werden.

HERDER.

* *Translation.*—"With the greatest possible solicitude avoid authorship. Too early, or immoderately employed, it makes the head *waste* and the heart empty; even were there no other worse consequences. A person who reads only to print, in all probability reads amiss; and he who sends away through the pen and the press, every thought, the moment it occurs to him, will in a short time have sent all away, and will become a mere journeyman of the printing-office, a *compositor*."

To which I may add from myself, that what medical physiologists affirm of certain secretions, applies equally to our thoughts; they too must be taken up again into the circulation, and be again and again re-secreted, in order to ensure a healthful vigour, both to the mind and to its intellectual offspring.

CHAPTER XII.

A Chapter of requests and premonitions concerning the perusal or commission of the chapter that follows.

In the perusal of philosophical works, I have been greatly benefitted by a resolve, which, in the antithetic form, and with the allowed quaintness of an adage or maxim, I have been accustomed to word thus: "*until you understand a writer's ignorance, presume yourself ignorant of his understanding.*" This *golden rule* of mine does, I own, resemble those of Pythagoras, in its obscurity rather than in its depth. If, however, the reader will permit me to be my own Hierocles, I trust that he will find its meaning fully explained by the following instances. I have now before me a treatise of a religious fanatic, full of dreams and supernatural *experiences*. I see clearly the writer's grounds, and their hollowness. I have a complete insight into the causes, which, through the medium of his body, had acted on his mind; and by application of received and ascertained laws, I can satisfactorily explain to my own reason, all the strange incidents which the writer records of himself. And this I can do without suspecting him of any intentional falsehood. As when in broad day-light a man tracks the steps of a traveller, who had lost his way in a fog, or by treacherous moonshine; even so, and with the same tranquil sense of certainty, can I follow the traces of this bewildered visionary. I UNDERSTAND HIS IGNORANCE.

On the other hand, I have been re-perusing, with the best energies of my mind, the Timæus of PLATO. Whatever I comprehend, impresses me with a reverential sense of the author's genius; but there is a considerable portion of the work to which I can attach no consistent meaning. In other treatises of the same philosopher, intended for the average comprehensions of men, I have been delighted with the masterly good sense, with the perspicuity of the language, and the aptness of the inductions. I recollect, likewise, that numerous passages in this author, which I thoroughly comprehend, were formerly no less unintelligible to me, than the passages now in question. It would, I am aware, be quite *fashionable* to

dismiss them at once as Platonic jargon. But this I cannot do, with satisfaction to my own mind, because I have sought in vain for causes adequate to the solution of the assumed inconsistency. I have no insight into the possibility of a man so eminently wise, using words with such half-meanings to himself, as must perforce pass into no-meaning to his readers. When, in addition to the motives thus suggested by my own reason, I bring into distinct remembrance the number and the series of great men, who, after long and zealous study of these works, had joined in honouring the name of PLATO with epithets, that almost transcend humanity, I feel that a contemptuous verdict on my part might argue want of modesty, but would hardly be received by the judicious, as evidence of superior penetration. Therefore, utterly baffled in all my attempts to understand the ignorance of Plato, I CONCLUDE MYSELF IGNORANT OF HIS UNDERSTANDING.

In lieu of the various requests, which the anxiety of authorship addresses to the unknown reader, I advance but this one; that he will either pass over the following chapter altogether, or read the whole connectedly. The fairest part of the most beautiful body will appear deformed and monstrous, if dissevered from its place in the organic whole. Nay, on delicate subjects, where a seemingly trifling difference of more or less may constitute a difference in *kind*, even a *faithful* display of the main and supporting ideas, if yet they are separated from the forms by which they are at once clothed and modified, may perchance present a skeleton indeed; but a skeleton to alarm and deter. Though I might find numerous precedents, I shall not desire the reader to strip his mind of all prejudices, or to keep all prior systems out of view during his examination of the present. For, in truth, such requests appear to me not much unlike the advice given to hypocondriacal patients in Dr. Buchan's domestic medicine; videlicit, to preserve themselves uniformly tranquil and in good spirits. Till I had discovered the art of destroying the memory *a parte post*, without injury to its future operations, and without detriment to the judgment, I should suppress the request as premature; and, therefore, however much I may *wish* to be read with an unprejudiced mind, I do not presume to state it as a necessary condition.

The extent of my daring is to suggest one criterion, by which it may be rationally conjectured before-hand, whether or no a reader

would lose his time, and perhaps his temper, in the perusal of this, or any other treatise constructed on similar principles. But it would be cruelly misinterpreted, as implying the least disrespect either for the moral or intellectual qualities of the individuals thereby precluded. The criterion is this: if a man receives as fundamental facts, and therefore of course indemonstrable, and incapable of further analysis, the general notions of matter, soul, body, action, passiveness, time, space, cause and effect, consciousness, perception, memory and habit; if he feels his mind completely at rest concerning all these, and is satisfied if only he can analyse all other notions into some one or more of these supposed elements, with plausible subordination and apt arrangement: to such a mind I would as courteously as possible convey the hint, that for him the chapter was not written.

Vir bonus es, doctus, prudens; aut *haud tibi spèro*.

For these terms do, in truth, *include* all the difficulties which the human mind can propose for solution. Taking them, therefore, in mass, and unexamined, it requires only a decent apprenticeship in logic, to draw forth their contents in all forms and colours, as the professors of legerdemain at our village fairs pull out ribbon after ribbon from their mouths. And not more difficult is it to reduce them back again to their different genera. But though this analysis is highly useful in rendering our knowledge more distinct, it does not really add to it. It does not increase, though it gives us a greater mastery over, the wealth which we before possessed. For forensic purposes, for all the established professions of society, this is sufficient. But for philosophy in its highest sense, as the science of ultimate truths, and therefor scientia scientiarum, this mere analysis of terms is preparative only, though, as a preparative discipline, indispensable.

Still less dare a favourable perusal be anticipated from the proselytes of that compendious philosophy, which talking of mind but thinking of brick and mortar, or other images equally abstracted from body, contrives a theory of spirit by nicknaming matter, and in a few hours can qualify its dullest disciples to explain the omne scibile by reducing all things to impressions, ideas, and sensations.

But it is time to tell the truth; though it requires some courage to avow it in an age and country, in which disquisitions on all sub-

jects, not privileged to adopt technical terms or scientific symbols, must be addressed to the PUBLIC. I say then, that it is neither possible or necessary for all men, or for many, to be PHILOSOPHERS. There is a *philosophic* (and inasmuch as it is actualized by an effort of freedom, an *artificial*) *consciousness*, which lies beneath, or, (as it were,) *behind* the spontaneous consciousness natural to all reflecting beings. As the elder Romans distinguished their northern provinces into Cis-Alpine and Trans-Alpine, so may we divide all the objects of human knowledge into those on this side, and those on the other side of the spontaneous consciousness; citra et trans conscientiam communem. The latter is exclusively the domain of PURE philosophy, which is, therefore, properly entitled *transcendental*, in order to discriminate it at once, both from mere reflection and *re*-presentation on the one hand, and on the other from those flights of lawless speculation, which, abandoned by *all* distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties, are justly condemned, as *transcendent*.* The first range of hills that encircles the scanty vale of human life, is the horizon for the majority of its inhabitants. On *its* ridges the common sun is born and departs. From *them* the stars rise, and

* This distinction between transcendental and transcendent, is observed by our elder divines and philosophers, whenever they express themselves *scholastically*. Dr. Johnson, indeed, has confounded the two words; but his own authorities do not bear him out. Of this celebrated dictionary, I will venture to remark, once for all, that I should suspect the man of a morose disposition, who should speak of it without respect and gratitude, as a most instructive and entertaining *book*, and hitherto, unfortunately, an indispensable book; but I confess, that I should be surprised at hearing from a philosophic and thorough scholar, any but very qualified praises of it, as a *dictionary*. I am not now alluding to the number of genuine words omitted; for this is (and, perhaps, to a great extent) true, as Mr. Wakefield has noticed, of our best Greek Lexicons; and this, too, after the successive labours of so many giants in learning. I refer, at present, both to omissions and commissions of a more important nature. What these are, me saltem judice, will be stated at full in THE FRIEND, re-published and completed.

I had never heard of the correspondence between Wakefield and Fox, till I saw the account of it this morning, (16th September, 1815,) in the Monthly Review. I was not a little gratified at finding, that Mr. Wakefield had proposed to himself nearly the same plan for a Greek and English Dictionary, which I had formed, and began to execute, now ten years ago. But far, far more grieved am I, that he did not live to complete it. I cannot but think it a subject of most serious regret, that the same heavy expenditure which is now employing in the *republication* of STEPHANUS augmented, had not been applied to a new Lexicon, on a more philosophical plan, with the English, German, and French Synonimes, as well as the Latin. In almost every instance, the precise *individual* meaning might be given in an English or German word; whereas, in Latin, we must too often be contented with a mere general and *inclusive* term. How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when we attempt to render the most copious language of the world, the most admirable for the fineness of its distinctions, into one of the poorest and most vague languages? Especially, when we reflect on the comparative number of the works, still extant, written while the Greek and Latin were living languages. Were I asked, what I deemed the greatest and most unmixt benefit which a wealthy individual, or an association of wealthy individuals, could bestow on

touching *them* they vanish. By the many, even this range, the natural limit and bulwark of the vale, is but imperfectly known. Its higher ascents are too often hidden by mists and clouds from uncultivated swamps, which few have courage or curiosity to penetrate. To the multitude below these vapours appear, now, as the dark haunts of terrific agents, on which none may intrude with impunity; and now all *a-glow*, with colours not their own, they are gazed at as the splendid palaces of happiness and power. But in all ages there have been a few who, measuring and sounding the rivers of the vale at the feet of their furthest inaccessible falls, have learnt that the sources must be far higher and far inward; a few, who even in the level streams have detected elements, which neither the vale itself or the surrounding mountains contained or could supply. How and whence to these thoughts, these strong probabilities, the ascertaining vision, the intuitive knowledge, may finally supervene, can be learnt only by the fact. I might oppose to the question the words with which Plotinus* supposes NATURE to answer a similar difficulty. "Should any one interrogate her how she works, if graciously she vouchsafe to listen and speak, she will reply, it behooves thee not to disquiet me with interrogatories, but to understand in silence, even as I am silent, and work without words."

Likewise, in the fifth book of the fifth Ennead, speaking of the highest and intuitive knowledge as distinguished from the discursive, or, in the language of Wordsworth,

"The vision and the faculty divine;"

he says: "it is not lawful to inquire from whence it sprang, as if it were a thing subject to place and motion, for it neither approached

their country and on mankind, I should not hesitate to answer, "a philosophical English dictionary, with the Greek, Latin, German, French, Spanish and Italian synonimes, and with corresponding indexes." That the learned languages might thereby be acquired better, in half the time, is but a part, and not the most important part, of the advantages which would accrue from such a work. O! if it should be permitted, by Providence, that, without detriment to freedom and independence, our government might be enabled to become more than a committee for war and revenue! There was a time when every thing was to be done by government. Have we not flown off to the contrary extreme?

* Ennead iii. l. 8. c. 3. The force of the Greek συνιέναι is imperfectly expressed by "understand;" our own idiomatic phrase "*to go along with me*," comes nearest to it. The passage that follows, full of profound sense, appears to me evidently corrupt; and, in fact, no writer more wants, better deserves, or is less likely to obtain, a new and more correct edition:—τί ἓν συιέναι; ὅτι τὸ γενόμενον ἐξι θέαμα ἐμὸν, σιωπησις (*mallem*, θέαμα, ἐμᾷ σιωπωσῆς,) καὶ φύσει γενομενον θεώρημα καὶ μοι γενομένη ἐκ θεωρίας σῆς ὠδί, σεν φύσιν ἔχειν

hither, nor again departs from hence to some other place; but it either appears to us, or it does not appear. So that we ought not to pursue it with a view of detecting its secret source, but to watch in quiet till it suddenly shines upon us; preparing ourselves for the blessed spectacle, as the eye waits patiently for the rising sun." They, and they only, can acquire the philosophic imagination, the sacred power of self-intuition, who, within themselves, can interpret and understand the symbol, that the wings of the air-sylph are forming within the skin of the caterpillar; those only, who feel in their own spirits the same instinct which impels the crysalis of the horned fly to leave room in its involucrum for antennæ yet to come. They know and feel, that the *potential* works *in* them, even as the *actual* works on them! In short, all the organs of sense are framed for a corresponding world of sense; and we have it. All the organs of spirit are framed for a correspondent world of spirit: though the latter organs are not developed in all alike. But they exist in all, and their first appearance discloses itself in the *moral* being. How else could it be, that even worldlings, not wholly debased, will contemplate the man of simple and disinterested goodness with contradictory feelings of pity and respect? "Poor man! he is not made for *this* world." Oh! herein they utter a prophecy of universal fulfilment; for man *must* either rise or sink.

It is the essential mark of the true philosopher to rest satisfied with no imperfect light, as long as the impossibility of attaining a fuller knowledge has not been demonstrated. That the common consciousness itself will furnish proofs by its own direction, that it is connected with master-currents below the surface, I shall merely assume as a postulate pro tempore. This having been granted, though but in expectation of the argument, I can safely deduce from it the equal truth of my former assertion, that philosophy cannot be intelligible to all, even of the most learned and cultivated classes. A system, the first principle of which it is to render the mind intuitive of the *spiritual* in man, (i. e. of that which lies *on the other side* of our natural consciousness,) must needs have a great obscu-

φιλοθεάμονα υπαρχει (*mallem*, καὶ μοι ἡε γενομὲνη ἐκ θεμριας ἀυτῆς ὠδίς.) "What then are we to understand? That whatever is produced is an intuition, I silent; and that, which is thus generated, is by its nature a theorem, or form of contemplation; and the birth, which results to me from this contemplation, attains to have a contemplative nature." So Synesius; Ωδίς ιρα, Αῤῥητα Γονδ. The after comparison of the process of the natura naturans with that of the geometrician is drawn from the very heart of philosophy.

rity for those who have never disciplined and strengthened this ulterior consciousness. It must, in truth, be a land of darkness, a perfect *Ante-Goshen*, for men to whom the noblest treasures of their being are reported only through the imperfect translation of lifeless and sightless *notions:* perhaps, in great part, through words which are but the shadows of notions; even as the notional understanding itself is but the shadowy abstraction of living and actual truth. On the IMMEDIATE, which dwells in every man, and on the original intuition, or absolute affirmation of it, (which is likewise in every man, but does not in every man rise into consciousness,) all the *certainty* of our knowledge depends; and this becomes intelligible to no man by the ministery of mere words from without. The medium by which spirits understand each other, is not the surrounding air; but the *freedom* which they possess in common, as the common ethereal element of their being, the tremulous reciprocations of which propagate themselves even to the inmost of the soul. Where the spirit of a man is not *filled* with the consciousness of freedom, (were it only from its restlessness, as of one still struggling in bondage,) all spiritual intercourse is interrupted, not only with others, but even with himself. No wonder, then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder, that in the fearful desert of his conciousness, he wearies himself out with empty words, to which no friendly echo answers, either from his own heart or the heart of a fellow being; or bewilders himself in the pursuit of *notional* phantoms, the mere refractions from unseen and distant truths, through the distorting medium of his own unenlivened and stagnant understanding! To remain unintelligible to such a mind, exclaims Schelling, on a like occasion, is honour and a good name before God and man.

The history of philosophy, (the same writer observes,) contains instances of systems which for successive generations, have remained enigmatic. Such he deems the system of Leibnitz, whom another writer, (rashly I think, and invidiously,) extols as the *only* philosopher who was himself deeply convinced of his own doctrines. As hitherto interpreted, however, they have not produced the effect which Leibnitz himself, in a most instructive passage, describes as the criterion of a true philosophy; namely, that it would at once explain and collect the fragments of truth scattered through systems apparently the most incongruous. The truth,

says he, is diffused more widely than is commonly believed; but it is often painted, yet oftener masked, and is sometimes mutilated, and sometimes, alas! in close alliance with mischievous errors. The deeper, however, we penetrate into the ground of things, the more truth we discover in the doctrines of the greater number of the philosophical sects. The want of *substantial* reality in the objects of the senses, according to the sceptics; the harmonies or numbers, the prototypes and ideas, to which the Pythagoreans and Platonists reduced all things; the ONE and ALL of Parmenides and Plotinus, without Spinozism;* the necessary connection of things according to the Stoics, reconcilable with the spontaneity of the other schools; the vital philosophy of the Cabalists and Hermetists,

* This is happily effected in three lines by SYNESIUS, in his Fourth Hymn:

'Εν καὶ Πάντα—(taken by itself) si *Spinozism.*
'Εν δ' Ἀπάντων—a mere *anima Mundi.*
'Εν τε πρό πρωντων—is mechanical Theism.

But unite all three, and the result is the Theism of St. Paul and Christianity. Synesius was censured for his doctrine of the pre-existence of the Soul; but never, that I can find, arraigned or deemed heretical for his Pantheism, though neither Giordano Bruno, or Jacob Behmen, ever avowed it more broadly.

Μύσας δὲ Νόος,
Τά τε καὶ τά λέγει,
Βύθον ἄῤῥητον
Αμφιχορεύων.
Σὺ τὸ τικτον ἔφυς,
Σὺ τὸ τικτόμενον·
Σὺ τὸ φωτίζιον,
Σὺ τὸ λαμπόμενον·
Σὺ τὸ φαινόμενον,
Σὺ τὸ κρυπτόμενον
Ιδίαις δυγαῖς.
'Εν καί πανα,
Εν καῷ ἑαυτο,
Καί διὰ πάντων.

Pantheism is, therefore, not necessarily irreligious or heretical; though it may be taught atheistically. Thus, Spinoza would agree with Synesius in calling God Φυσις εν Νοεροις, the *Nature* in Intelligences; but he could not subscribe to the preceding Νοῦς καὶ Νοερος, *i. e.* Himself Intelligence and intelligent.

In this biographical sketch of my literary life, I may be excused, if I mention here, that I had translated the eight Hymns of Synesius from the Greek into English Anacreontics before my 15th year.

who assumed the universality of sensation; the substantial forms and entelechies of Aristotle and the schoolmen, together with the mechanical solution of all particular phenomena according to Democritus and the recent philosophers; all these we shall find united in one perspective central point, which shows regularity and a coincidence of all the parts in the very object which, from every other point of view, must appear confused and distorted. The spirit of sectarianism has been hitherto our fault, and the cause of our failures. We have imprisoned our own conceptions by the lines which we have drawn in order to exclude the conceptions of others. J'ai trouve que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu'elles nient.

A system which aims to deduce the memory with all the other functions of intelligence, must, of course, place its first position from beyond the memory, and anterior to it, otherwise the principle of solution would be itself a part of the problem to be solved. Such a position, therefore, must, in the first instance, be demanded, and the first question will be, by what right is it demanded? On this account I think it expedient to make some preliminary remarks on the introduction of POSTULATES in philosophy. The word postulate, is borrowed from the science of mathematics. (See Schell. abhandl zur Erlauter, des id der Wissenschaftslehre.) In geometry the primary construction is not demonstrated, but postulated. This first and most simple construction in space, is the point in motion, or the line. Whether the point is moved in one and the same direction, or whether its direction is continually changed, remains as yet undetermined. But if the direction of the point have been determined, it is either by a point without it, and then there arises the straight line which incloses no space; or the direction of the point is not determined by a point without it, and then it must flow back again on itself; that is, there arises a cyclical line, which does inclose a space. If the straight line be assumed as the positive, the cyclical is then the negation of the straight. It is a line which at no point strikes out into the straight, but changes its direction continuously. But if the primary line be conceived as undetermined, and the straight line as determined throughout, then the cyclical is the third, compounded of both. It is at once undetermined and determined; undetermined through any point without, and determined through itself. Geometry, therefore, supplies phi-

losophy with the example of a primary intuition, from which every science that lays claim to *evidence* must take its commencement. The mathematician does not begin with a demonstrable proposition, but with an intuition, a practical idea.

But here an important distinction presents itself. Philosophy is employed on objects of the INNER SENSE, and cannot, like geometry, appropriate to every construction a correspondent *outward* intuition. Nevertheless, philosophy, if it is to arrive at evidence, must proceed from the most original construction, and the question then is, what is the most original construction or first productive act for the INNER SENSE? The answer to this question depends on the direction which is given to the INNER SENSE. But in philosophy the INNER SENSE cannot have its direction determined by any outward object. To the original construction of the line, I can be compelled by a line drawn before me on the slate or on sand. The stroke thus drawn is indeed not the line itself, but only the image or picture of the line. It is not from it that we first learn to know the line; but, on the contrary, we bring this stroke to the original line, generated by the act of the imagination; otherwise we could not define it as without breadth or thickness. Still, however, this stroke is the sensuous image of the original or ideal line, and an efficient mean to excite *every* imagination to the intuition of it.

It is demanded then, whether there be found any means in philosophy to determine the direction of the INNER SENSE, as in mathematics it is determinable by its specific image or outward picture. Now, the inner sense has its direction determined for the greater part only by an act of freedom. One man's consciousness extends only to the pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in him by external impressions; another enlarges his inner sense to a consciousness of forms and quantity; a third, in addition to the image, is conscious of the conception or notion of the thing; a fourth attains to a notion of notions—he reflects on his own reflections; and thus we may say, without impropriety, that the one possesses more or less inner sense than the other. This more or less betrays already that philosophy, in its principles, must have a practical or moral, as well as a theoretical or speculative side. This difference in degree does not exist in the mathematics. Socrates in Plato shows, that an ignorant slave may be brought to understand, and, of himself, to solve the most geometrical problem. Socrates drew the

figures for the slave in the sand. The disciples of the critical philosophy could likewise (as was indeed actually done by La Forge and some other followers of Des Cartes) represent the origin of our representations in copper-plates; but no one has yet attempted it, and it would be utterly useless. To an Esquimaux or New Zealander, our most popular philosophy would be wholly unintelligible; for the sense, the inward organ, is not yet born in him. So is there many a one among us, yes, and some who think themselves philosophers too, to whom the philosophic organ is entirely wanting. To such a man, philosophy is a mere play of words and notions, like a theory of music to the deaf, or like the geometry of light to the blind. The connection of the parts and their logical dependencies may be seen and remembered; but the whole is groundless and hollow, unsustained by living contact, unaccompanied with any realizing intuition which exists by, and *in* the act that affirms its existence, which is known, because it is, and is, because it is known. The words of Plotinus, in the assumed person of nature, holds true of the philosophic energy. Ἰὸ θεωρῶν με θεώρημα ποιεῖ, ὥςπερ οἱ γεωμέδαι θεωρέδες γράφειν, αλλ' ἐμὲ μὴ γραφέντα, θεωρόμενος δὲ, ὑφίςανται αἱ τῶν ςωμάδων γδάμμαι. With me the act of contemplation makes the thing contemplated, as the geometricians contemplating describe lines correspondent; but I not describing lines, but simply contemplating, the representative form of things rise up into existence.

The postulate of philosophy, and, at the same time, the test of philosophic capacity, is no other than the heaven-descended KNOW THYSELF! *E cœlo descendit*, Γνωθι ςεαυτον.) and this at once practically and speculatively. For, as philosophy is neither a science of the reason or understanding only, nor merely a science of morals, but the science of BEING altogether, its primary ground can be neither merely speculative or merely practical, but both in one. All knowledge rests on the coincidence of an object with a subject. (My readers have been warned in a former chapter, that for their convenience as well as the writer's, the term subject, is used by me in its scholastic sense, as equivalent to mind or sentient being, and as the necessary correlative of object or *quicquid objicitur menti.*) For we can *know* that only which is true; and the truth is universally placed in the coincidence of the thought with the thing, of the representation with the object represented.

Now the sum of all that is merely OBJECTIVE, we will henceforth call NATURE, confining the term to its passive and material sense, as comprising all the phenomena by which its existence is made known to us. On the other hand, the sum of all that is SUBJECTIVE, we may comprehend in the name of the SELF or INTELLIGENCE. Both conceptions are in necessary antithesis. Intelligence is conceived of, as exclusively representative, nature as exclusively represented; the one as conscious, the other as without consciousness. Now, in all acts of positive knowledge, there is required a reciprocal concurrence of both, namely, of the conscious being, and of that which is, in itself, unconscious. Our problem is to explain this concurrence, its possibility, and its necessity.

During the act of knowledge itself, the objective and subjective are so instantly united, that we cannot determine to which of the two the priority belongs. There is here no first, and no second; both are coinstantaneous and one. While I am attempting to explain this intimate coalition, I must suppose it dissolved. I must necessarily set out from the one, to which, therefore, I give hypothetical antecedence, in order to arrive at the other. But, as there are but two factors or elements in the problem, subject and object, and as it is left indeterminate from which of them I should commence, there are two cases equally possible.

I. EITHER THE OBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THEN WE HAVE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE SUPERVENTION OF THE SUBJECTIVE, WHICH COALESCES WITH IT.

The notion of the subjective is not contained in the notion of the objective. On the contrary, they mutually exclude each other. The subjective, therefore, must supervene to the objective. The conception of nature does not apparently involve the co-presence of an intelligence making an ideal duplicate of it, i. e. representing it. This desk, for instance, would (according to our natural notions) be, though there should exist no sentient being to look at it. This then is the problem of natural philosophy. It assumes the objective or unconscious nature as the first, and has, therefore, to explain how intelligence can supervene to it, or how itself can grow into intelligence. If it should appear that all enlightened naturalists, without having distinctly proposed the problem to themselves, have yet constantly moved in the line of its solution, it must afford a strong presumption that the problem itself is founded in nature. For if

all knowledge has, as it were, two poles reciprocally required and presupposed, all sciences must proceed from the one or the other and must tend toward the opposite as far as the equatorial point in which both are reconciled, and become identical. The necessary tendence, therefore, of all natural philosophy, is from nature to intelligence; and this, and no other, is the true ground and occasion of the instinctive striving to introduce theory into our views of natural phenomena. The highest perfection of natural philosophy would consist in the perfect spiritualization of all the laws of nature into laws of intuition and intellect. The phenomena (*the material*) must wholly disappear, and the laws alone (*the formal*) must remain. Thence it comes, that in nature itself, the more the principle of law breaks forth, the more does the *husk* drop off, the phenomena themselves become more spiritual, and at length cease altogether in our consciousness. The optical phenomena, are but a geometry, the lines of which are drawn by light, and the materiality of this light itself has already become matter of doubt. In the appearances of magnetism, all trace of matter is lost, and, of the phenomena of gravitation, which, not a few among the most illustrious Newtonians, have declared no otherwise comprehensible than as an immediate spiritual influence, there remains nothing but its law, the execution of which on a vast scale, is the mechanism of the heavenly motions. The theory of natural philosophy would then be completed; when all nature was demonstrated to be identical in essence with that which, in its highest known power, exists in man as an intelligence, and self-consciousness; when the heavens and the earth shall declare, not only the power of their Maker, but the glory and the presence of their God, even as he appeared to the great prophet during the vision of the mount in the skirts of his divinity.

This may suffice to show, that even natural science, which commences with the material phenomenon as the reality and substance of things existing, does yet, by the necessity of theorizing, unconsciously, and, as it were, instinctively, end in nature as an intelligence; and by this tendency, the science of nature becomes finally natural philosophy, the one of the two poles of fundamental science.

2. OR THE SUBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THE PROBLEM THEN IS, HOW THERE SUPERVENES TO IT A COINCIDENT OBJECTIVE.

In the pursuit of these sciences, our success in each depends on an austere and faithful adherence to its own principles, with a careful separation and exclusion of those which appertain to the opposite science. As the natural philosopher, who directs his views to the objective, avoids, above all things, the intermixture of the subjective in his knowledge, as for instance, arbitrary suppositions or rather suffictions, occult qualities, spiritual agents, and the substitution of final or efficient causes; so on the other hand, the transcendental or intelligential philosopher, is equally anxious to preclude all interpolation of the objective into the subjective principles of his science; as, for instance, the assumption of impresses or configurations in the brain, correspondent to miniature pictures on the retina painted by rays of light from supposed originals, which are not the immediate and real objects of vision, but deductions from it, for the purposes of explanation. This purification of the mind is effected by an absolute and scientific scepticism to which the mind voluntarily determines itself for the specific purpose of future certainty. Des Cartes, who (in his meditations) himself first, at least of the moderns, gave a beautiful example of this voluntary doubt, this self-determined indetermination, happily expresses its utter difference from the scepticism of vanity or irreligion: Nec tamen in eo scepticos imitabar, qui dubitant tantum ut dubitent, et preter incertitudinem ipsam nihil quærunt. Nam contra totus in eo eram ut aliquid certi reperirem.—DES CARTES, *de Methodo*. Nor, is it less distinct in its motives and final aim, than in its proper objects, which are not, as in ordinary scepticism, the prejudices of education and circumstance, but those original and innate prejudices, which nature herself has planted in all men, and which, to all but the philosopher, are the first principles of knowledge, and the final test of truth.

Now these essential prejudices are all reducible to the one fundamental presumption, THAT THERE EXIST THINGS WITHOUT US. As this on the one hand originates, neither in grounds or arguments, and yet on the other hand remains proof against all attempts to remove it by grounds or arguments, (*naturam furca expellas tamen usque redibit*;) on the one hand lays claim to IMMEDIATE certainty as a position at once indemonstrable and irresistible, and yet on the other hand, inasmuch as it refers to something essentially different from ourselves, nay, even in opposition to ourselves, leaves

it inconceivable how it could possibly become a part of our immediate consciousness; (in other words, how that, which ex hypothesi is and continues to be extrinsic and alien to our being, should become a modification of our being,) the philosopher, therefore, compels himself to treat this faith as nothing more than a prejudice, innate, indeed, and connatural, but still a prejudice.

The other position, which not only claims, but necessitates the admission of its immediate certainty, equally for the scientific reason of the philosopher as for the common sense of mankind at large, namely, I AM, cannot so properly be entitled a prejudice. It is groundless, indeed, but then in the very idea it precludes all ground, and separated from the immediate consciousness, loses its whole sense and import. It is groundless; but only because it is itself the ground of all other certainty. Now the apparent contradiction, that the former position, namely, the existence of things without us, which from its nature cannot be immediately certain, should be received as blindly and as independently of all grounds as the existence of our own being, the transcendental philosopher can solve only by the supposition, that the former is unconsciously involved in the latter; that it is not only coherent, but identical, and one and the same thing with our own immediate self-consciousness. To demonstrate this identity, is the office and object of his philosophy.

If it be said, that this is Idealism, let it be remembered, that it is only so far idealism as it is at the same time, and on that very account, the truest and most binding realism. For wherein does the realism of mankind properly consist? In the assertion, that there exists a something without them, what, or how, or where, they know not, which occasions the objects of their perception? Oh no! This is neither connatural or universal. It is what a few have taught and learnt in the schools, and which the many repeat without asking themselves concerning their own meaning. The realism common to all mankind is far elder, and lies infinitely deeper than this hypothetical explanation of the origin of our perceptions, an explanation skimmed from the mere surface of mechanical philosophy. It is the table itself, which the man of common sense believes himself to see, not the phantom of a table, from which he may argumentatively deduce the reality of a table, which he does not see. If to destroy the reality of all that we actually behold, be

idealism, what can be more egregiously so than the system of modern metaphysics, which banishes us to a land of shadows, surrounds us with apparitions, and distinguishes truth from illusion only by the majority of those who dream the same dream? "*I* asserted that the world was mad," exclaimed poor Lee, "and the world said that I was mad, and, confound them, they outvoted me."

It is to the true and original realism, that I would direct the attention. This believes and requires neither more nor less, than that the object which it beholds or presents to itself, is the real and very object. In this sense, however much we may strive against it, we are all collectively born idealists, and therefore, and only therefore, are we at the same time realists. But of this the philosophers of the schools know nothing, or despise the faith as the prejudice of the ignorant vulgar, because they live and move in a crowd of phrases and notions from which human nature has long ago vanished. Oh, ye that reverence yourselves, and walk humbly with the divinity in your own hearts, ye are worthy of a better philosophy! Let the dead bury the dead, but do you preserve your human nature, the depth of which was never yet fathomed by a philosophy made up of notions and mere logical entities.

In the third treatise of my *Logosophia*, announced at the end of this volume, I shall give (deo volente) the demonstrations and constructions of the Dynamic Philosophy scientifically arranged. It is, according to my conviction, no other than the system of Pythagoras and of Plato revived and purified from impure mixtures. Doctrina per tot manus tradita tandem in Vappam desiit. The science of arithmetic furnishes instances, that a rule may be useful in practical application, and for the particular purpose may be sufficiently authenticated by the result, before it has itself been fully demonstrated. It is enough, if only it be rendered intelligible. This will, I trust, have been effected in the following Theses, for those of my readers who are willing to accompany me through the following Chapter, in which the results will be applied to the deduction of the imagination, and with it the principles of production and of genial criticism in the fine arts.

Thesis I.—Truth is correlative to being. Knowledge, without a correspondent reality, is no knowledge; if we know, there must be somewhat known by us. To know is in its very essence a verb active.

THESIS II.—All truth is either mediate, that is, derived from some other truth or truths, or immediate and original. The latter is absolute, and its formula A. A.; the former is of dependent or conditional certainty, and represented in the formula B. A. The certainty, which inheres in A, is attributable to B.

SCHOLIUM. A chain without a staple, from which all the links derived their stability, or a series without a first, has been not inaptly allegorized, as a string of blind men, each holding the skirt of the man before him, reaching far out of sight, but all moving without the least deviation in one straight line. It would be naturally taken for granted that there was a guide at the head of the file: what if it were answered—No! sir, the men are without number, and infinite blindness supplies the place of sight?

Equally *inconceivable* is a cycle of equal truths, without a common and central principle, which prescribes to each its proper sphere in the system of science. That the absurdity does not so immediately strike us, that it does not seem equally *unimaginable*, is owing to a surreptitious act of the imagination, which, instinctively, and without our noticing the same, not only fills at the intervening spaces, and contemplates the *cycle*, (of B. C. D. E. F. &c.) as a continuous *circle*, (A.) giving to all, collectively, the unity of their common orbit; but likewise supplies, by a sort of *subintelligitur*, the one central power, which renders the movement harmonious and cyclical.

THESIS III.—We are to seek, therefore, for some absolute truth, capable of communicating to other positions a certainty, which it has not itself borrowed; a truth self-grounded, unconditional, and known by its own light. In short, we have to find a somewhat, which *is*, simply, because it *is*. In order to be such, it must be one which is its own predicate, so far, at least, that all other nominal predicates must be modes and repetitions of itself. Its existence, too, must be such as to preclude the possibility of requiring a cause, or antecedent, without an absurdity.

THESIS IV.—That there can be but one such principle, may be proved a priori; for were there two or more, each must refer to some other, by which its equality is affirmed; consequently, neither would be self-established, as the hypothesis demands. And a pos-

teriori, it will be proved by the principle itself, when it is discovered, as involving universal antecedents in its very conception.

SCHOLIUM. If we affirm of a board that it is blue, the predicate (blue) is accidental, and not implied in the subject, board. If we affirm of a circle, that it is equi-radical, the predicate, indeed, is implied in the definition of the subject; but the existence of the subject itself is contingent, and supposes both a cause and a percipient. The same reasoning will apply to the indefinite number of supposed indemonstrable truths, exempted from the prophane approach of philosophic investigation by the amiable Beattie, and other less eloquent and not more profound inaugurators of common sense, on the throne of philosophy; a fruitless attempt, were it only that it is the two-fold function of philosophy to reconcile reason with common sense, and to elevate common sense into reason.

THESIS V.—Such a principle cannot be any THING OR OBJECT. Each thing is what it is in consequence of some other thing. An infinite, independent *thing*,* is no less a contradiction, than an infinite circle, or a sideless triangle. Besides, a thing is that which is capable of being an object, of which itself is not the sole percipient. But an object is inconceivable without a subject as its antithesis. Omne perceptum percipientem supponit.

But neither can the principle be found in a subject, as a subject, contra-distinguished from an object; for unicuique percipienti aliquid objicitur perceptum. It is to be found, therefore, neither in object or subject, taken separately; and, consequently, as no other third is conceivable, it must be found in that which is neither subject nor object exclusively, but which is the identity of both.

THESIS VI.—This principle, and so characterized, manifests itself in the SUM or I AM; which I shall hereafter indiscriminately express by the words spirit, self, and self-consciousness. In this, and in this alone, object and subject, being and knowing, are identical, each involving and supposing the other. In other words, it is a subject which becomes a subject by the act of constructing itself objectively to itself; but which never is an object except for itself,

*The impossibility of an absolute thing, (substantia unica,) as neither genus, species, nor individuum, as well as its utter unfitness for the fundamental position of a philosophic system, will be demonstrated in the critique on Spinozism in the fifth treatise of my Logosophia.

and only so far as by the very same act it becomes a subject. It may be described, therefore, as a perpetual self-duplication of one and the same power, into object and subject, which presuppose each other, and can exist only as antithesis.

SCHOLIUM. If a man be asked how he *knows* that he is? he can only answer, sum quia sum. But if (the absoluteness of this certainty having been admitted) he be again asked, how he, the individual person, came to be, then, in relation to the ground of his *existence*, not to the ground of his *knowledge* of that existence? he might reply, sum quia deus est, or still more philosophically, sum quia in deo sum.

But if we elevate our conception to the absolute self, to the great eternal I AM, then the principle of being, and of knowledge, of idea, and of reality; the ground of existence, and the ground of the knowledge of existence, are absolutely identical. Sum quia sum; I am, because I affirm myself to be; I affirm myself to be, because I am.*

THESIS VII.—If then I know myself only through myself, it is contradictory to require any other predicate of self, but that of self-consciousness. Only in the self-consciousness of a spirit is there the required identity of object and of representation; for herein consists the essence of a spirit, that it is self-representative. If, there-

* It is most worthy of notice, that in the first revelation of himself, not confined to individuals; indeed, in the very first revelation of his absolute being, Jehovah at the same time revealed the fundamental truth of all philosophy, which must either commence with the absolute, or have no fixed commencement; i. e. cease to be philosophy. I cannot but express my regret, that in the equivocal use of the word *that*, for *in that*, or *because*, our admirable version has rendered the passage susceptible of a degraded interpretation in the mind of common readers or hearers, as if it were a mere reproof to an impertinent question, I am what I am, which might be equally affirmed of himself by any existent being.

The Cartesian Cogito, ergo sum, is objectionable, because either the Cogito is used extra Gradum, and then it is involved in the sum and is tautological, or it is taken as a particular mode or dignity, and then it is subordinated to the sum as the species to the genus; or, rather, as a particular modification to the subject modified; and not pre-ordinated, as the arguments seem to require. For Cogito is Sum Cogitans. This is clear by the inevidence of the converse. Cogitat ergo est, is true, because it is a mere application of the logical rule: Quicquid in genere est, est et in specie. Est (cogitans) ergo est. It is a cherry tree; therefore it is a tree. But, est ergo cogitat, is illogical: for quod est in specie, non *necessario* in genere est. It may be true. I hold it to be true, that quicquid vere est, est per veram sui affirmationem; but it is a derivative, not an immediate truth. Here, then, we have, by anticipation, the distinction between the conditional finite I, (which, as known in distinct consciousness by occasion of experience, is called, by Kant's followers, the impirical I,) and the absolute I AM, and likewise the dependence, or rather the inherence of the former in the latter; in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," as St. Paul divinely asserts, differing widely from the Theists of the mechanic school, (as Sir J. Newton, Locke, &c.) who must say from *whom* we *had* our being, and with it, life and the powers of life.

fore, this be the one only immediate truth, in the certainty of which the reality of our collective knowledge is grounded, it must follow that the spirit in all the objects which it views, views only itself. If this could be proved, the immediate reality of all intuitive knowledge would be assured. It has been shown, that a spirit is that which is its own object, yet not originally an object, but an absolute subject for which all, itself included, may become an object. It must, therefore, be an ACT; for every object is, as an *object*, dead, fixed, incapable in itself of any action, and necessarily finite. Again: the spirit, (originally the identity of object and subject,) must, in some sense, dissolve this identity, in order to be conscious of it: fit alter et idem. But this implies an act, and it follows, therefore, that intelligence or self-consciousness is impossible, except by and in a will. The self-conscious spirit, therefore, is a will; and freedom must be assumed as a *ground* of philosophy, and can never be deduced from it.

THESIS VIII.—Whatever in its origin is objective, is likewise as such, necessarily infinite. Therefore, since the spirit is not originally an object, and as the subject exists in antithesis to an object, the spirit cannot originally be finite. But neither can it be a subject without becoming an object, and as it is originally the identity of both, it can be conceived neither as infinite or finite, exclusively, but as the most original union of both. In the existence, in the reconciling, and the recurrence of this contradiction, consists the process and mystery of production and life.

THESIS IX.—This principium commune essendi et cognoscendi, as subsisting in a WILL, or primary ACT of self-duplication, is the mediate or indirect principle of every science; but it is the immediate and direct principle of the ultimate science alone, i. e. of transcendental philosophy alone. For it must be remembered, that all these Theses refer solely to one of the two Polar Sciences, namely, to that which commences with, and rigidly confines itself within the subjective, leaving the objective, (as far as it is exclusively objective,) to natural philosophy, which is its opposite pole. In its very idea, therefore, as a systematic knowledge of our collective KNOWING, (scientia scientæ,) it involves the necessity of some one highest principle of knowing, as at once the source and the accompanying form in all particular acts of intellect and perception. This,

it has been shown, can be found only in the act and evolution of self-consciousness. We are not investigating an absolute principium essendi; for then, I admit, many valid objections might be started against our theory; but an absolute principium cognoscendi. The result of both the sciences, or their equatorial point, would be the principle of a total and undivided philosophy, as, for prudential reasons, I have chosen to anticipate in the Scholium to Thesis VI. and the note subjoined. In other words, philosophy would pass into religion, and religion become inclusive of philosophy. We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD.

THESIS X.—The transcendental philosopher does not inquire, what ultimate ground of our knowledge there may lie out of our knowing, but what is the last in our knowing itself, beyond which *we* cannot pass. The principle of our knowing is sought within the sphere of our knowing. It must be something, therefore, which can itself be known. It is asserted, only, that the act of self-consciousness is for *us* the source and principle of all *our* possible knowledge. Whether, abstracted from us, there exists any thing higher and beyond this primary self-knowing, which is for us the form of all our knowing, must be decided by the result.

That the self-consciousness is the fixt point, to which for *us* all is morticed and annexed, needs no further proof. But that the self-consciousness may be the modification of a higher form of being, perhaps of a higher consciousness, and this again of a yet higher, and so on in an infinite regressus; in short, that self-consciousness may be itself something explicable into something, which must lie beyond the possibility of our knowledge, because the whole synthesis of our intelligence is first formed in and through the self-consciousness, does not at all concern us as transcendental philosophers. For to us the self-consciousness is not a kind of *being*, but a kind of *knowing*, and that, too, the highest and farthest that exists for *us*. It may however be shown, and has in part already been shown, in pages 74–75, that even when the objective is assumed as the first, we yet can never pass beyond the principle of self-consciousness. Should we attempt it, we must be driven back from ground to ground, each of which would cease to be ground

the moment we pressed on it. We must be whirled down the gulph of an infinite series. But this would make our reason baffle the end and purpose of all reason, namely, unity and system. Or we must break off the system arbitrarily, and affirm an absolute something that is in and of itself at once cause and effect, (*causa sui*,) subject and object, or, rather, the absolute identity of both. But as this is inconceivable, except in a self-consciousness, it follows, that even as natural philosophers we must arrive at the same principle from which, as transcendental philosophers, we set out; that is, in a self-consciousness in which the principium essendi does not stand to the principium cognoscendi in the relation of cause to effect, but both the one and the other are co-inherent and identical. Thus the true system of natural philosophy places the sole reality of things in an ABSOLUTE, which is at once causa sui et effectus, παλιγ αυτοπαλιγ, Υιος σαυτε—in the absolute identity of subject and object, which it calls nature, and which in its highest power is nothing else but self-conscious will or intelligence. In this sense the position of Malbranche, that we see all things in God, is a strict philosophical truth; and equally true is the assertion of Hobbes, of Hartley, and of their masters in ancient Greece, that all real knowledge supposes a prior sensation. For sensation itself is but vision nascent, not the cause of intelligence, but intelligence itself revealed as an earlier power in the process of self-construction.

Μάκαρ, Ὑλαβί μοι!
Πάλιν, Ὑλαβί μοι
Εἰ παρά κόσμον,
Εἰ παρὰ μοῖραν
Τῶν ἐῶν ἔθηγον!

Bearing then this in mind, that intelligence is a self-development, not a quality supervening to a substance, we may abstract from all *degree*, and for the purpose of philosophic construction, reduce it to *kind*, under the idea of an indestructible power, with two opposite and counteracting forces, which by a metaphor borrowed from astronomy, we may call the centrifugal and centripedal forces. The intelligence in the one tends to *objectize* itself, and in the other to *know* itself in the object. It will be hereafter my business to construct, by a series of intuitions, the progressive schemes

that must follow from such a power with such forces, till I arrive at the fulness of the *human* intelligence. For my present purpose, I *assume* such a power as my principle, in order to deduce from it a faculty, the generation, agency, and application of which form the contents of the ensuing chapter.

In a preceding page I have justified the use of technical terms in philosophy, whenever they tend to preclude confusion of thought, and when they assist the memory by the exclusive singleness of their meaning more than they may, for a short time, bewilder the attention by their strangeness. I trust, that I have not extended this privilege beyond the grounds on which I have claimed it; namely, the conveniency of the scholastic phrase to distinguish the kind from all degrees, or rather to express the kind with the abstraction of degree, as, for instance, multeity instead of multitude; or, secondly, for the sake of correspondence in sound and interdependent or antithetical terms, as subject and object; or, lastly, to avoid the wearying recurrence of circumlocutions and definitions. Thus I shall venture to use potence, in order to express a specific degree of power, in imitation of the algebraists. I have even hazarded the new verb potenziate, with its derivatives, in order to express the combination or transfer of powers. It is with new or unusual terms, as with privileges in courts of justice or legislature; there can be no legitimate *privilege*, where there already exists a positive law adequate to the purpose; and when there is no law in existence, the privilege is to be justified by its accordance with the end, or final cause of all law. Unusual and new-coined words are doubtless an evil; but vagueness, confusion, and imperfect conveyance of our thoughts, are a far greater. Every system, which is under the necessity of using terms not familiarized by the metaphysics in fashion, will be described as written in an unintelligible style, and the author must expect the charge of having substituted learned jargon for clear conception; while, according to the creed of our modern philosophers, nothing is deemed a clear conception, but what is representable by a distinct image. Thus the *conceivable* is reduced within the bounds of the *picturable*. Hinc patet, qui fiat ut, *cum irrepræsentable* et *impossibile* vulgo ejusdem significatus habeantur, conceptus tam *Continui*, quam *infiniti*, a plurimis rejeciantur, quippe quorum, *secundum leges cognitionis intuitivæ*, repræsentatio est impossibilis. Quanquam autem harum e non

paucis scholis explosarum notionum, præsertim prioris, causam hic non gero, maximi tamen momenti erit monuisse: gravissimo illos errore labi, qui tam perversa argumentandi ratione utuntur. Quicquid enim *repugnat* legibus intellectus et rationis, utique est impossibile; quod autem, cum rationis puræ sit objectum, legibus cognitionis intuitivæ tantummodo *non subest*, non item. Nam hinc dissensus inter facultatem *sensitivam* et *intellectualem*, (quarem indolem mox exponam) nihil indigitat, nisi, *quas mens ab intellectu accerptas fert ideas abstractas, illas in concreto exequi, et in Intuitus commutare sæpenumero non posse.* Hæc autem reluctantia *subjectiva* mentitur, ut plurimum, repugnantiam aliquam *objectivam*, et incautos facile fallit, limitibus, quibus *mens humana* circuscribitur, pro iis habitis, quibus *ipsa rerum essentia* continetur.*—*Kant de Mundi Sensibilis atque Intelligibilis forma et principiis*, 1770.

Critics, who are most ready to bring this charge of pedantry and unintelligibility, are the most apt to overlook the important fact, that beside the language of words, there is a language of spirits, (sermo interior,) and that the former is only the vehicle of the latter. Consequently, their assurance, that they do not understand the philosophic writer, instead of proving any thing against the philosophy, may furnish an equal and (cæteris paribus) even a stronger presumption against their own philosophic talent.

Great indeed are the obstacles which an English metaphysician

* *Translation.*—"Hence it is clear, from what cause many reject the notion of the continuous and the infinite. They take, namely, the words irrepresentable and impossible, in one and the same meaning; and, according to the forms of sensuous evidence, the notion of the continuous and the infinite is doubtless impossible. I am not now pleading the cause of these laws, which not a few schools have thought proper to explode, especially the former (the law of continuity.) But it is of the highest importance to admonish the reader, that those who adopt so perverted a mode of reasoning, are under a grievous error. Whatever opposes the formal principles of the understanding and the reason, is confessedly impossible; but not therefore that which is therefore not amenable to the forms of *sensuous* evidence, because it is exclusively an object of pure intellect. For this non-coincidence of the sensuous and the intellectual, (the nature of which I shall presently lay open,) proves nothing more but that the mind cannot always adequately represent in the concrete, and transform into distinct images, abstract notions derived from the pure intellect. But this contradiction, which is in itself merely subjective, (i. e. an incapacity in the nature of man,) too often passes for an incongruity or impossibility in the object, (i. e. the notions themselves,) and seduce the incautious to mistake the limitations of the human faculties for the limits of things, as they really exist."

I take this occasion to observe, that here and elsewhere, Kant uses the terms intuition, and the verb active intuori, (*Germanice* anschauen) for which we have unfortunately no correspondent word, exclusively for that which can be represented in space and time. He therefore consistently, and rightly, denies the possibility of intellectual intuitions. But as I see no adequate reason for this exclusive sense of the term, I have reverted to its wider signification authorized by our elder theologians and metaphysicians, according to whom the term comprehends all truths known to us without a medium.

has to encounter. Amongst his most respectable and intelligent judges, there will be many who have devoted their attention exclusively to the concerns and interests of human life, and who bring with them to the perusal of a philosophic system an habitual aversion to all speculations, the utility and application of which are not evident and immediate. To these I would, in the first instance, merely oppose an authority which they themselves hold venerable, that of Lord Bacon: non inutile scientiæ existimande sunt, quarum in se nullus est usus, si ingenia acuant et ordinent.

There are others, whose prejudices are still more formidable, inasmuch as they are grounded in their moral feelings and religious principles, which had been alarmed and shocked by the impious and pernicious tenets defended by Hume, Priestly, and the French fatalists or necessitarians; some of whom had perverted metaphysical reasonings to the denial of the mysteries, and, indeed, of all the peculiar doctrines of christianity; and others even to the subversion of all distinction between right and wrong. I would request such men to consider what an eminent and successful defender of the christian faith has observed, that true metaphysics are nothing else but true divinity, and that in fact the writers who have given them such just offence, were sophists, who had taken advantage of the general neglect into which the science of logic has unhappily fallen, rather than metaphysicians, a name, indeed, which those writers were the first to explode as unmeaning. Secondly, I would remind them, that as long as there are men in the world to whom the Γνῶθι σεαυτον is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be metaphysicians and metaphysical speculations; that false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone; and that if the reasoning be clear, solid, and pertinent, the truth deduced can never be the less valuable on account of the depth from which it may have been drawn.

A third class profess themselves friendly to metaphysics, and believe that they are themselves metaphysicians. They have no objection to system or terminology, provided it be the method and the nomenclature to which they have been familiarized in the writings of Locke, Hume, Hartley, Condillac, or, perhaps, Dr. Reid and Professor Stewart. To objections from this cause, it is a sufficient answer, that one main object of my attempt was to demonstrate the vagueness or insufficiency of the terms used in the

metaphysical schools of France and Great Britain since the revolution, and that the errors which I propose to attack cannot subsist, except as they are concealed behind the mask of a plausible and indefinite nomenclature.

But the worst and widest impediment still remains. It is the predominance of a popular philosophy, at once the counterfeit and the mortal enemy of all true and manly metaphysical research. It is that corruption, introduced by certain immethodical aphorisming Eclectics, who, dismissing, not only all system, but all logical connexion, pick and choose whatever is most plausible and showy; who select whatever words can have some semblance of sense attached to them without the least expenditure of thought; in short, whatever may enable men to talk of what they do not understand, with a careful avoidance of every thing that might awaken them to a moment's suspicion of their ignorance. This, alas! is an irremediable disease, for it brings with it, not so much an indisposition to any particular system, but an utter loss of taste and faculty for all system and for all philosophy. Like echoes, that beget each other amongst the mountains, the praise or blame of such men rolls in volleys long after the report from the original blunderbuss. Sequacitas est potius et coitio quam consensus: et tamen (quod pessimum est) pusillanimitas ista non sine arrogantia et fastidio si offert. *Novum Organum.*

I shall now proceed to the nature and genesis of the imagination; but I must first take leave to notice, that after a more accurate perusal of Mr. Wordsworth's remarks on the imagination, in his preface to the new edition of his poems, I find that my conclusions are not so consentient with his, as, I confess, I had taken for granted. In an article contributed by me to Mr. Southey's Omniana, on the soul and its organs of sense, are the following sentences: "These (the human faculties) I would arrange under the different senses and powers; as the eye, the ear, the touch, &c.; the imitative power, voluntary and automatic; the imagination, or shaping and modifying power; the fancy, or the aggregative and associative power; the understanding, or the regulative, substantiating and realizing power; the speculative reason—vis theoretica et scientifica, or the power by which we produce, or aim to produce, unity, necessity, and universality in all our knowledge, by means of

principles a priori;* the will, or practical reason; the faculty of choice (*Germanice*, Willkuhr) and (distinct both from the moral will and the choice) the *sensation* of volition, which I have found reason to include under the head of single and double touch." To this, as far as it relates to the subject in question, namely, the words (*the aggregative and associative power*) Mr. Wordsworth's "only objection is, that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the imagination as the fancy." I reply, that if by the power of evoking and combining, Mr. W. means the same as, and no more than, I meant by the aggregative and associative, I continue to deny, that it belongs at all to the imagination; and I am disposed to conjecture, that he has mistaken the co-presence of fancy with imagination for the operation of the latter singly. A man may work with two very different tools at the same moment; each has its share in the work, but the work effected by each is distinct and different. But it will probably appear in the next Chapter, that deeming it necessary to go back much further than Mr. Wordsworth's subject required or permitted, I have attached a meaning to both fancy and imagination, which he had not in view, at least while he was writing that preface. He will judge. Would to heaven, I might meet with many such readers. I will conclude with the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor: he to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit. (*J. Taylor's* VIA PACIS.)

* This phrase, *a priori*, is in common most grossly misunderstood, and an absurdity burthened on it, which it does not deserve! By knowledge, *a priori*, we do not mean, that we can know any thing previously to experience, which would be a contradiction in terms; but, that having once known it by occasion of experience, (i. e. something acting upon us from without,) we then know, that it must have pre-existed, or the experience itself would have been impossible. By experience only, I know that I have eyes; but, then my reason convinces me, that I must have had eyes in order to the experience.

CHAPTER XIII.

On the imagination, or esemplastic power.

O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not depraved from good: created all
Such to perfection, one first nature all
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of subetance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spirituous and pure,
As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk: from thence the leaves
More airy: last, the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes. Flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
To *vital* spirits aspire: to *animal*:
To *intellectual!*—give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding: whence the soul
REASON receives. And reason is her *being*,
Discursive or intuitive.

PAR. LOST, b. v.

"Sane si res corporales nil nisi materiale continerent, verissime dicerentur in fluxu consistere neque habere subetantiale quicquam, quemadmodum et Platonici olim recte agnovere.—Hinc igitur, præter pure mathematica et phantasiæ subjecta, colligi quædam metaphysica solaque mente perceptibilia, esse admittenda: et massæ materiali *principium* quoddam superius et, ut sic dicam, *formale* addendum: quandoquidem omnes veritates rerum corporearum ex solis axiomatibus logisticis et geometricis, nempe de magno et parvo, toto et parte, figura et situ, colligi non possint; sed alia de causa et effectu, *actioneque* et *passione*, accedere debeant, quibus ordinis rerum rationes salventur. Id principium rerum, an ἐνέλεχίαν an vim appelemus, non refert, modo meminerimus, per solam *Virium* notionem intelligibiliter explicari."

LEIBNITZ: *Op.* T. II. P. II. *p.* 53.—T. III. *p.* 321.

Σέθεμαι Νοερῶν
Κυρφίαν τάξιν
Χωρὶς ΤΙ ΜΕΧΟΝ
Ου *καλαχυθέν*.

SYNESII, *Hymn III. l.* 231.

DES CARTES, speaking as a naturalist, and in imitation of Archimedes, said, give me matter and motion, and I will construct

you the universe. We must of course understand him to have meant: I will render the construction of the universe intelligible. In the same sense the transcendental philosopher says, grant me a nature having two contrary forces, the one of which tends to expand infinitely, while the other strives to apprehend or *find* itself in this infinity, and I will cause the world of intelligences, with the whole system of their representations, to rise up before you. Every other science pre-supposes intelligence as already existing and complete: the philosopher contemplates it in its growth, and, as it were, represents its history to the mind from its birth to its maturity.

The venerable Sage of Koenigsberg has preceded the march of this master-thought as an effective pioneer in his essay on the introduction of negative quantities into philosophy, published 1763. In this, he has shown, that instead of assailing the science of mathematics by metaphysics, as Berkley did in his Analyst, or of sophisticating it, as Wolff did, by the vain attempt of deducing the first principles of geometry from supposed deeper grounds of ontology, it behooved the metaphysician rather to examine whether the only province of knowledge, which man has succeeded in erecting into a pure science, might not furnish materials, or at least hints for establishing and pacifying the unsettled, warring, and embroiled domain of philosophy. An imitation of the mathematical *method*, had indeed been attempted with no better success than attended the essay of David to wear the armour of Saul. Another use, however, is possible, and of far greater promise, namely, the actual application of the positions which had so wonderfully enlarged the discoveries of geometry, mutatis mutandis, to philosophical subjects. Kant, having briefly illustrated the utility of such an attempt in the questions of space, motion, and infinitely small quantities, as employed by the mathematician, proceeds to the idea of negative quantities and the transfer of them to metaphysical investigation. Opposites, he well observes, are of two kinds, either logical, i. e. such as are absolutely incompatible; or real, without being contradictory. The former, he denominates Nihil negativum irrepræsentabile, the connexion of which produces nonsense. A body in motion is something—Aliquid cogitabile; but a body, at one and the same time in motion and not in motion, is nothing, or, at most, air articulated into nonsense. But a motary force of a body in one direction, and an equal force of the same

body in an opposite direction is not incompatible, and the result, namely, rest, is real and representable. For the purposes of mathematical calculus, it is indifferent which force we term negative, and which positive, and consequently, we appropriate the latter to that which happens to be the principal object in our thoughts. Thus, if a man's capital be ten and his debts eight, the subtraction will be the same, whether we call the capital negative debt, or the debt negative capital. But in as much as the latter stands practically in reference to the former, we of course represent the sum as 10–8. It is equally clear, that two equal forces acting in opposite directions, both being finite, and each distinguished from the other by its direction only, must neutralize or reduce each other to inaction. Now the transcendental philosophy demands, first, that two forces should be conceived which counteract each other by their essential nature; not only not in consequence of the accidental direction of each, but as prior to all direction, nay, as the primary forces from which the conditions of all possible directions are derivative and deducible: secondly, that these forces should be assumed to be both alike infinite, both alike indestructible. The problem will then be to discover the result or product of two such forces, as distinguished from the result of those forces which are finite, and derive their difference solely from the circumstance of their direction. When we have formed a scheme or outline of these two different kinds of force, and of their different results by the process of discursive reasoning, it will then remain for us to elevate the Thesis from notional to actual, by contemplating intuitively this one power with its two inherent, indestructible, yet counteracting forces, and the results or generations to which their inter-penetration gives existence, in the living principle, and in the process of our own self-consciousness. By what instrument this is possible, the solution itself will discover, at the same time that it will reveal to, and for whom it is possible. Non omnia possumes omnes. There is a philosophic, no less than a poetic genius, which is differenced from the highest perfection of talent, not by degree, but by kind.

The counteraction, then, of the two assumed forces, does not depend on their meeting from opposite directions; the power which acts in them is indestructible; it is, therefore, inexhaustibly re-ebullient; and as something must be the result of these two forces,

both alike infinite, and both alike indestructible; and, as rest or neutralization cannot be this result, no other conception is possible, but that the product must be a tertium aliquid, or finite generation. Consequently, this conception is necessary. Now this tertium aliquid can be no other than an interpenetration of the counteracting powers partaking of both

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Thus far had the work been transcribed for the press, when I received the following letter from a friend, whose practical judgment I have had ample reason to estimate and revere, and whose taste and sensibility preclude all the excuses which my self-love might possibly have prompted me to set up in plea against the decision of advisers of equal good sense, but with less tact and feeling.

"Dear C.—

"You ask my opinion concerning your chapter on the imagination, both as to the impressions it made on myself, and as to those which I think it will make on the PUBLIC, i. e. that part of the public who, from the title of the work, and from its forming a sort of introduction to a volume of poems, are likely to constitute the great majority of your readers.

"As to myself, and stating, in the first place, the effect on my *understanding*, your opinions, and method of argument, were not only *so new* to me, but so directly the reverse of all I had ever been accustomed to consider as truth, that, even if I had comprehended your premises sufficiently to have admitted them, and had seen the necessity of your conclusions, I should still have been in that state of mind, which, in your note, p. 50, you have so ingeniously evolved, as the antithesis to that in which a man is when he makes a *bull*. In your own words, I should have felt as if I had been standing on my head.

"The effect on my *feelings*, on the other hand, I cannot better represent, than by supposing myself to have known only our light, airy, modern chapels of ease, and then, for the first time, to have been placed, and left alone, in one of our largest Gothic cathedrals, in a gusty moonlight night of autumn. 'Now in glimmer, and now in gloom;' often in palpable darkness, not without a chilly sensation of terror; then suddenly emerging into broad, yet visionary, lights, with coloured shadows of fantastic shapes, yet all decked with holy insignia and mystic symbols; and, ever and anon, coming out full upon pictures, and stone-work images of great men, with whose *names* I was familiar, but which looked upon me with countenances and an expression, the most dissimilar to all I had been in the habit of connecting with those names. Those whom I had been taught to venerate as almost super-human in magnitude of intellect, I found perched in

little fret-work niches, as grotesque dwarfs; while the grotesques, in my hitherto belief, stood guarding the high altar with all the characters of Apotheosis. In short, what I had supposed substances, were thinned away into shadows, while, every where, shadows were deepened into substances:

> If substance may be called what shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either!
>
> MILTON.

"Yet, after all, I could not but repeat the lines which you had quoted from a MS. poem of your own in the FRIEND, and applied to a work of Mr. Wordsworth's, though with a few of the words altered:

> "———An orphic tale indeed,
> A tale *obscure*, of high and passionate thoughts
> To *a strange* music chaunted!"

"Be assured, however, that I look forward anxiously to your great book on the CONSTRUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY, which you have promised and announced; and that I will do my best to understand it. Only, I will not promise to descend into the dark cave of Trophonius with you, there to rub my own eyes, in order to *make* the sparks and figured flashes which I am required to *see*.

"So much for myself. But, as for the PUBLIC, I do not hesitate a moment in advising and urging you to withdraw the chapter from the present work, and to reserve it for your announced treatises on the Logos or communicative intellect in Man and Deity. First, because, imperfectly as I understand the present chapter, I see clearly that you have done too much, and yet not enough. You have been obliged to omit so many links from the necessity of compression, that what remains, looks, (if I may recur to my former illustration,) like the fragments of the winding steps of an old ruined tower. Secondly, a still stronger argument, (at least, one that I am sure will be more forcible with you,) is, that your readers will have both right and reason to complain of you. This chapter, which cannot, when it is printed, amount to so little as an hundred pages, will, of necessity, greatly increase the expense of the work; and every reader who, like myself, is neither prepared, or, perhaps, calculated for the study of so abstruse a subject so abstrusely treated, will, as I have before hinted, be almost entitled to accuse you of a sort of imposition on him. For who, he might truly observe, could, from your title-page, viz: "**My Literary Life and Opinions,**" published, too, as introductory to a volume of miscellaneous poems, have anticipated, or even conjectured, a long treatise on ideal Realism, which holds the same relation, in abstruseness, to Plotinus, as Plotinus does to Plato. It will be well if, al-

ready, you have not too much of metaphysical disquisition in your work, though, as the larger part of the disquisition is historical, it will, doubtless, be both interesting and instructive to many, to whose *unprepared* minds your speculations on the esemplastic power would be utterly unintelligible. Be assured, if you do publish this chapter in the present work, you will be reminded of Bishop Berkley's Siris, announced as an Essay on Tar-water, which, beginning with tar, ends with the Trinity, the omne scibile forming the interspace. I say in the *present* work. In that greater work to which you have devoted so many years, and study so intense and various, it will be in its proper place. Your prospectus will have described and announced both its contents and their nature; and if any persons purchase it, who feel no interest in the subjects of which it treats, they will have themselves only to blame.

"I could add, to these arguments, one derived from pecuniary motives, and particularly from the probable effects on the *sale* of your present publication; but they would weigh little with you, compared with the preceding. Besides, I have long observed, that arguments drawn from your own personal interests, more often act on you as narcotics than as stimulants, and that, in money concerns, you have some small portion of pignature in your moral idiosyncracy, and, like these amiable creatures, must, occasionally, be pulled backward from the boat in order to make you enter it. All success attend you, for if hard thinking and hard reading are merits, you have deserved it.

Your affectionate, &c."

In consequence of this very judicious letter, which produced complete conviction on my mind, I shall content myself for the present with stating the main result of the Chapter, which I have reserved for that future publication, a detailed prospectus of which the reader will find at the close of the second volume.

The IMAGINATION, then, I consider either as primary or secondary. The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or, where this process is rendered impossible, yet still, at all events, it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead.

FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but

fixities and definities. The Fancy is, indeed, no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space, and blended with, and modified by, that empirical phenomenon of the will which we express by the word CHOICE. But, equally with the ordinary memory, it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.

Whatever, more than this, I shall think it fit to declare, concerning the powers and privileges of the imagination, in the present work, will be found in the critical essay on the uses of the supernatural in poetry, and the principles that regulate its introduction; which the reader will find prefixed to the poem of **The Ancient Mariner.**

CHAPTER XIV.

Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed—Preface to the second edition—The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony—Philosophic definitions of a poem, and poetry with scholia.

During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty, by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moon-light or sun-set, diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself, (to which of us I do not recollect,) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at, was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in *this* sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the "Lyrical Ballads;" in which it was agreed that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest, and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself, as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by

awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view, I wrote the "Ancient Mariner," and was preparing, among other poems, the "Dark Ladie," and the "Christobel," in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry, had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form, the "Lyrical Ballads" were published; and were presented by him, as an *experiment*, whether subjects, which, from their nature, rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life, as to produce the pleasurable interest which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of style that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression,) called the language of *real* life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy, I explain the inveteracy, and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being; had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets, merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they, indeed, contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies, and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead

weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found, too, not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed, perhaps, in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say by its *religious* fervour. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied; meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would, of itself, have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface, in the sense attributed to them, and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but, on the contrary, objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth, in his recent collection, has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honoured more than I deserve, by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare, once for all, in what points I coincide with his opinions, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible, I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my ideas, first, of a POEM; and, secondly, of POETRY itself, in *kind*, and in *essence*.

The office of philosophical *disquisition* consists in just *distinction*; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical *process* of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the *result* of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference, therefore, must consist in a

different combination of them, in consequence of a different object proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations, by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well known enumeration of the days in the several months:

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November," &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm superadded, whatever be their contents, *may* be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial *form*. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may *result* from the *attainment* of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be, the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the *ultimate* end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest, indeed, is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the Bathyllus even of an Anacreon, or the Alexis of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle *these* to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such as to justify

the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition, then, so deduced, may be thus worded: A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species, (having *this* object in common with it,) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited, in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distichs, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, disjoins it from its context, and makes it a separate whole, instead of an harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result, unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely, or chiefly, by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind, excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air; at every step he pauses, and half recedes, and, from the retrogressive movement, collects the force which again carries him onward. Precipitandus est *liber* spiritus, says Petronius Arbiter, most happily. The

epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning, condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of PLATO, and Bishop TAYLOR, and the Theoria Sacra of BURNET, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contra-distinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah, (indeed a very large portion of the whole book,) is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth, was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever *specific* import we attach to the word poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, or ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved *in keeping* with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement as will partake of *one*, though not a *peculiar*, property of poetry. And this, again, can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention, than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been, in part, anticipated in the preceding disquisition on the fancy and imagination. What is poetry? is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts and emotions of the poet's own mind. The poet, described in *ideal* perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and, (as it were,) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul, (*laxis effertur habenis*,) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities; of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual,

with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgment, ever awake, and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter: and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. "Doubtless," as Sir John Davies observes of the soul, (and his words may, with slight alteration, be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic IMAGINATION:)

> "Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
> Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,
> As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
> As we our food into our nature change.
>
> From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,
> And draws a kind of quintessence from things:
> Which to her proper nature she transforms,
> To bear them light on her celestial wings.
>
> Thus does she, when from individual states
> She doth abstract the universal kinds;
> Which then, re-clothed in divers names and fates,
> Steal access through our senses to our minds."

Finally, GOOD SENSE is the BODY of poetic genius, FANCY its DRAPERY, MOTION its LIFE, and IMAGINATION the SOUL, that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

CHAPTER XV.

The specific symptoms of poetic power elucidated in a critical analysis of Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis, and Lucrece.

In the application of these principles to purposes of practical criticism, as employed in the appraisal of works more or less imperfect, I have endeavoured to discover what the qualities in a poem are, which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power, as distinguished from general talent determined to poetic composition by accidental motives, by an act of the will, rather than by the inspiration of a genial and productive nature. In this investigation, I could not, I thought, do better than keep before me the earliest work of the greatest genius that, perhaps, human nature has yet produced, our *myriad-minded** Shakspeare. I mean the "Venus and Adonis," and the "Lucrece;" works which give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity of his genius. From these I abstracted the following marks, as characteristics of original poetic genius in general.

1. In the "Venus and Adonis," the first and most obvious excellence, is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man. "The man that hath not music in his soul," can, indeed, never be a genuine poet. Imagery (even taken from nature, much more when transplanted from books, as travels, voyages, and works of natural history) affecting incidents; just

* "Ανηρ μυριονους, a phrase which I have borrowed from a Greek monk, who applies it to a patriarch of Constantinople. I might have said, that I have *reclaimed*, rather than borrowed it; for it seems to belong to Shakspeare, de jure singulari, et ex privilegio naturæ.

thoughts; interesting personal or domestic feelings; and with these the art of their combination or intertexture in the form of a poem; may all, by incessant effort, be acquired as a trade, by a man of talents and much reading, who, as I once before observed, has mistaken an intense desire of poetic reputation for a natural poetic genius; the love of the arbitrary end for a possession of the peculiar means. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this, together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learnt. It is in these that "Poeta nascitur non fit."

2. A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself. At least I have found, that where the subject is taken immediately from the author's personal sensations and experiences, the excellence of a particular poem is but an equivocal mark, and often a fallacious pledge, of genuine poetic power. We may, perhaps, remember the tale of the statuary, who had acquired considerable reputation for the legs of his goddesses, though the rest of the statue accorded but indifferently with ideal beauty, till his wife, elated by her husband's praises, modestly acknowledged, that she herself had been his constant model. In the Venus and Adonis, this proof of poetic power exists even to excess. It is throughout as if a superior spirit, more intuitive, more intimately conscious, even than the characters themselves, not only of every outward look and act, but of the flux and reflux of the mind in all its subtlest thoughts and feelings, were placing the whole before our view; himself, meanwhile, unparticipating in the passions, and actuated only by that pleasurable excitement, which had resulted from the energetic fervour of his own spirit, in so vividly exhibiting what it had so accurately and profoundly contemplated. I think I should have conjectured from these poems, that even then the great instinct, which impelled the poet to the drama, was secretly working in him, prompting him by a series and never-broken chain of imagery, always vivid, and because unbroken, often minute; by the highest effort of the picturesque in words, of which words are capable, higher, perhaps, than was ever realized by any other poet, even Dante not excepted; to provide a substitute for that visual lan-

guage, that constant intervention and running comment, by tone, look and gesture, which in his dramatic works he was entitled to expect from the players. His "Venus and Adonis" seem at once the characters themselves, and the whole representation of those characters by the most consummate actors. You seem to be *told* nothing, but to see and hear every thing. Hence it is, that from the perpetual activity of attention required on the part of the reader; from the rapid flow, the quick change, and the playful nature of the thoughts and images; and, above all, from the alienation, and, if I may hazard such an expression, the utter *aloofness* of the poet's own feelings, from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst; that though the very subject cannot but detract from the pleasure of a delicate mind, yet never was poem less dangerous on a moral account. Instead of doing as Ariosto, and as, still more offensively, Weiland has done; instead of degrading and deforming passion into appetite, the trials of love into the struggles of concupiscence, Shakspeare has here represented the animal impulse itself, so as to preclude all sympathy with it, by dissipating the reader's notice among the thousand outward images, and now beautiful, now fanciful circumstances, which form its dresses and its scenery; or by diverting our attention from the main subject by those frequent witty or profound reflections, which the poet's ever active mind has deduced from, or connected with, the imagery and the incidents. The reader is forced into too much action to sympathize with the merely passive of our nature. As little can a mind thus roused and awakened be brooded on by mean and indistinct emotion, as the low, lazy mist can creep upon the surface of a lake, while a strong gale is driving it onward in waves and billows.

3. It has been before observed, that images, however beautiful, though faithfully copied from nature, and as accurately represented in words, do not of themselves characterize the poet. They become proofs of original genius only, as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or, when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or, lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit,

> "Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air."

In the two following lines, for instance, there is nothing objectionable, nothing which would preclude them from forming, in their proper place, part of a descriptive poem:

> "Behold yon row of pines, that, shorn and bow'd,
> Bend from the sea-blast, seen at twilight eve."

But with the small alteration of rhythm, the same words would be equally in their place in a book of topography, or in a descriptive tour. The same image will rise into a semblance of poetry if thus conveyed:

> "Yon row of bleak and visionary pines,
> By twilight-glimpse discerned, mark! how they flee
> From the fierce sea-blast, all their tresses wild
> Streaming before them."

I have given this as an illustration, by no means as an instance, of that particular excellence which I had in view, and in which Shakspeare, even in his earliest, as in his latest works, surpasses all other poets. It is by this, that he still gives a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents. Unaided by any previous excitement, they burst upon us at once in life and in power.

> "Full many a glorious morning have I seen
> *Flatter* the mountain tops with sovereign eye."
>
> SHAKSPEARE'S SONNET 33.

> "Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come—
> * * * * * * * * * * *
> * * * * * * * * * * *
> The mortal moon hath her eclipse endur'd,
> And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
> Incertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
> And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
> Now with the drops of this most balmy time
> My Love looks fresh: and DEATH to me subscribes!
> Since spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
> While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.
> And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
> When tyrant's crests, and tombs of brass are spent."
>
> SONNET 107.

As of higher worth, so doubtless still more characteristic of poetic genius does the imagery become, when it moulds and colours itself to the circumstances, passion, or character, present and fore-

most in the mind. For unrivalled instances in this excellence, the reader's own memory will refer him to the LEAR, OTHELLO, in short, to which not of the "*great, ever living, dead man's*" dramatic works? Inopem me copia fecit. How true it is to nature, he has himself finely expressed in the instance of love, in Sonnet 98.

"From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud pied April, drest in all its trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing;
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them, where they grew;
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were, tho' sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play!

Scarcely less sure, or if a less valuable, not less indispensable mark

Γενίμα μέν Ποιητα———
———ὁϛις ϛημα γενναιον λαχοι,

will the image supply, when, with more than the power of the painter, the poet gives us the liveliest image of succession with the feeling of simultaneousness!

With this he breaketh from the sweet embrace
Of those fair arms, that held him to her heart,
And homeward through the dark lawns runs apace:
Look how a bright star shooteth from the sky!
So glides he through the night from Venus' eye.

4. The last character I shall mention, which would prove indeed but little, except as taken conjointly with the former; yet, without which the former could scarce exist in a high degree, and (even if this were possible) would give promises only of transitory flashes and a meteoric power, is DEPTH, and ENERGY of THOUGHT. No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emo-

tions, language. In Shakspeare's *poems*, the creative power, and the intellectual energy, wrestle as in a war embrace. Each in its excess of strength seems to threaten the extinction of the other. At length, in the DRAMA they were reconciled, and fought each with its shield before the breast of the other. Or, like two rapid streams, that at their first meeting within narrow and rocky banks, mutually strive to repel each other, and intermix reluctantly and in tumult; but soon finding a wider channel and more yielding shores, blend, and dilate, and flow on in one current and with one voice. The Venus and Adonis did not, perhaps, allow the display of the deeper passions. But the story of Lucretia seems to favour, and even demand their intensest workings. And yet we find in *Shakspeare's* management of the tale, neither pathos, nor any other *dramatic* quality. There is the same minute and faithful imagery as in the former poem, in the same vivid colours, inspirited by the same impetuous vigour of thought, and diverging and contracting with the same activity of the assimilative and of the modifying faculties; and with a yet larger display, a yet wider range of knowledge and reflection; and, lastly, with the same perfect dominion, often *domination*, over the whole world of language. What then shall we say? even this: that Shakspeare, no mere child of nature; no automaton of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings, and at length gave birth to that stupendous power, by which he stands alone, with no equal or second in his own class; to that power, which seated him on one of the two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain, with Milton as his compeer, not rival. While the former darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion, the one Proteus of the fire and the flood; the other attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own IDEAL. All things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of MILTON; while SHAKSPEARE becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself. O what great men hast thou not produced, England! my country! truly indeed—

> Must *we* be free or die, who speak the tongue
> Which SHAKSPEARE spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which MILTON held. In every thing we are sprung
> Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold! WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER XVI.

Striking points of difference between the Poets of the present age, and those of the 15th and 16th centuries—Wish expressed for the union of the characteristic merits of both.

CHRISTENDOM, from its first settlement on feudal rights, has been so far one great body, however imperfectly organized, that a similar spirit will be found in each period to have been acting in all its members. The study of Shakspeare's *poems* (I do not include his dramatic works, eminently as they too deserve that title) led me to a more careful examination of the contemporary poets both in this and in other countries. But my attention was especially fixed on those of Italy, from the birth to the death of Shakspeare; that being the country in which the fine arts had been most sedulously, and, hitherto, most successfully cultivated. Abstracted from the degrees and peculiarities of individual genius, the properties common to the good writers of each period seem to establish one striking point of difference between the poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and that of the present age. The remark may, perhaps, be extended to the sister art of painting. At least, the latter will serve to illustrate the former. In the present age, the poet (I would wish to be understood as speaking generally, and, without allusion to individual names) seems to propose to himself as his main object, and as that which is the most characteristic of his art, new and striking IMAGES, with INCIDENTS that interest the affections or excite the curiosity. Both his characters and his descriptions he renders, as much as possible, specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture. In his diction and metre, on the other hand, he is comparatively careless. The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose. And the language from "Pope's translation of Homer," to "Dar-

win's Temple of Nature," may, notwithstanding some illustrious exceptions, be too faithfully characterized, as claiming to be poetical for no better reason than that it would be intolerable in conversation or in prose. Though alas! even our prose writings, nay, even the stile of our more set discourses, strive to be in the fashion, and trick themselves out in the soiled and over-worn finery of the meretricious muse. It is true, that of late a great improvement in this respect is observable in our most popular writers. But it is equally true, that this recurrence to plain sense, and genuine mother English, is far from being general; and that the composition of our novels, magazines, public harangues, &c. is commonly as trivial in thought, and enigmatic in expression, as if ECHO and SPHINX had laid their heads together to construct it. Nay, even of those who have most rescued themselves from this contagion, I should plead inwardly guilty to the charge of duplicity or cowardice, if I withheld my conviction, that few have guarded the purity of their native tongue with that jealous care which the sublime Dante, in his tract "De la nobile velgare eloquenza," declares to be the first duty of a poet. For language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests. "Animadverte, quam sit ab improprietate verborum pronum hominibus prolabi in errores circa res!" HOBBES: *Exam. et Emend. hod. Math.*—"Sat vero, in hac vitæ brevitate et naturæ obscuritate, rerum est, quibus cognoscendis tempus impendatur, ut confusis et multivocis sermonibus intelligendis illud consumere non opus est. Eheu! quantas strages paravere verba nubila, quæ tot dicunt, ut nihil dicunt—nubes potius, e quibus et in rebus politicis et in ecclesia turbines et tonitrua erumpunt! Et proinde recte dictum putamus a Platone in Gorgia: ὁς αν τα ονομαστα ειδει, ισεται και τα πραγματα: et ab Epicteto, αρχη παιδευσεως ἡ των ονομασων επισκεψις: et prudentissime Galenus scribit, ἡ των ονομασων χρησις παραχθεισα και την των πραγματων επιταραττει γνωσιν. Egregie vero J. C. Scaliger, in Lib. 1. de Plantis: Est *primum*, inquit, *sapientis officium, bene sentire, ut sibi vivat: proximum, bene loqui, ut patriæ vivat.*" SENNERTUS *de Puls: Differentia.*

Something analogous to the materials and structure of modern poetry I seem to have noticed (but here I beg to be understood as speaking with the utmost diffidence) in our common landscape

painters. Their foregrounds and intermediate distances are comparatively unattractive: while the main interest of the landscape is thrown into the back ground, where mountains and torrents and castles forbid the eye to proceed, and nothing tempts it to trace its way back again. But in the works of the great Italian and Flemish masters, the front and middle objects of the landscape are the most obvious and determinate, the interest gradually dies away in the back ground, and the charm and peculiar worth of the picture consists, not so much in the specific objects which it conveys to the understanding in a visual language formed by the substitution of figures for words, as in the beauty and harmony of the colours, lines, and expression, with which the objects are represented. Hence, novelty of subject was rather avoided than sought for. Superior excellence, in the manner of treating the same subjects, was the trial and test of the artist's merit.

Not otherwise is it with the more polished poets of the 15th and 16th centuries, especially with those of Italy. The imagery is almost always general: sun, moon, flowers, breezes, murmuring streams, warbling songsters, delicious shades, lovely damsels, cruel as fair, nymphs, naiads and goddesses, are the materials which are common to all, and which each shaped and arranged according to his judgment or fancy, little solicitous to add or to particularize. If we make an honourable exception in favour of some English poets, the thoughts too are as little novel as the images; and the fable of their narrative poems, for the most part drawn from mythology, or sources of equal notoriety, derive their chief attractions from their manner of treating them; from impassioned flow, or picturesque arrangement. In opposition to the present age, and perhaps in as faulty an extreme, they placed the essence of poetry in the *art*. The excellence at which they aimed consisted in the exquisite polish of the diction, combined with perfect simplicity. This, their prime object, they attained by the avoidance of every word which a *gentleman* would *not use* in dignified conversation, and of every word and phrase, which none but a *learned* man *would* use; by the studied position of words and phrases, so that not only each part should be melodious in itself, but contribute to the harmony of the whole, each note referring and conducing to the melody of all the foregoing and following words of the same period or stanza; and, lastly, with equal labour, the greater because unbetrayed, by

the variation and various harmonies of their metrical movement. Their measures, however, were not indebted for their variety to the introduction of new metres, such as have been attempted of late in the "Alonzo and Imogen," and others borrowed from the German, having in their very mechanism a specific overpowering tune, to which the generous reader humours his voice and emphasis, with more indulgence to the author than attention to the meaning or quantity of the words; but which to an ear familiar with the *numerous* sounds of the Greek and Roman poets, has an effect not unlike that of galloping over a paved road in a German stage-wagon without springs. On the contrary, our elder bards, both of Italy and England, produced a far greater, as well as more charming variety, by countless modifications, and subtle balances of sound, in the common metres of their country. A lasting and enviable reputation awaits the man of genius, who should attempt and realize a union; who should recall the high finish; the appropriateness; the facility; the delicate proportion; and, above all, the perfusive and omnipresent grace, which have preserved, as in a shrine of precious amber, the "Sparrow" of Catullus, the "Swallow," the "Grasshopper," and all the other little loves of Anacreon: and which with bright, though diminished glories, revisited the youth and early manhood of christian Europe, in the vales of Arno,* and the groves

* These thoughts were suggested to me during the perusal of the Madrigals of GIOVAMBATISTA STROZZI, published in Florence (nella Stamperia del Sermartelli) 1st May, 1593, by his sons Lorenzo and Filippo Strozzi, with a dedication to their deceased paternal uncle, "Signor Leone Strozzi, Generale delle battaligie di Santa Chiesa." As I do not remember to have seen either the poems or their author mentioned in any English work, or have found them in any of the common collections of Italian poetry, and as the little work is of rare occurrence, I will transcribe a few specimens. I have seldom met with compositions that possessed, to my feelings, more of that satisfying *entireness*, that complete adequateness of the manner to the matter which so charms us in Anacreon, joined with the tenderness, and more than the *delicacy* of Catullus. Trifles as they are, they were probably elaborated with great care; yet in the perusal we refer them to a spontaneous energy rather than to voluntary effort. To a cultivated taste, there is a delight in *perfection* for its own sake, independent of the material in which it is manifested, that none but a cultivated taste can understand or appreciate.

After what I have advanced, it would appear presumption to offer a translation; even if the attempt was not discouraged by the different genius of the English mind and language, which demands a denser body of thought as the condition of a high polish, than the Italian. I cannot but deem it likewise an advantage in the Italian tongue, in many other respects inferior to our own, that the language of poetry is more distinct from that of prose than with us. From the earlier appearance and established primacy of the Tuscan poets, concurring with the number of independent states, and the diversity of written dialects, the Italians have gained a poetic idiom, as the Greeks before them had obtained from the same causes, with greater and more various discriminations—ex. gr. the ionic for their heroic verses; the attic for their iambic; and the two modes of the doric, the lyric or sacerdotal, and the pastoral, the distinctions of which were doubtless more obvious to the Greeks themselves than they are to us.

of Isis and of Cam; and who with these should combine the keener interest, deeper pathos, manlier reflection, and the fresher and more various imagery, which give a value and a name that will not

I will venture to add one other observation before I proceed to the transcription. I am aware, that the sentiments which I have avowed concerning the points of difference between the poetry of the present age, and that of the period between 1500 and 1650, are the reverse of the opinion commonly entertained. I was conversing on this subject with a friend, when the servant, a worthy and sensible woman, coming in, I placed before her two engravings, the one a pinky-coloured plate of the day, the other a masterly etching by Salvator Rosa, from one of his own pictures. On pressing her to tell us which she preferred, after a little blushing and flutter of feeling, she replied—why, that, Sir! to be sure! (pointing to the *ware* from the Fleet street print shops,) it's *so neat* and elegant. T'other is such a *scratchy* slovenly thing." An artist, whose writings are scarcely less valuable than his works, and to whose authority more deference will be willingly paid, than I could even wish should be shown to mine, has told us, and from his own experience too, that good taste must be *acquired*, and like all other good things, is the result of thought, and the submissive study of the best models. If it be asked—"But what shall I deem such?" the answer is: *presume* these to be the best, the *reputation* of which has been matured into *fame* by the consent of ages. For wisdom always has a final majority, if not by conviction, yet by acquiescence. In addition to Sir J. Reynolds, I may mention Harris of Salisbury, who, in one of his philosophical disquisitions, has written on the means of acquiring a just taste with the precision of Aristotle, and the elegance of Quintillian.

MADRIGALE.

Gelido suo ruscel chiaro, e tranquillo
M'insegno Amor, di state a mezzo'l giorno:
Ardean le selve, ardean le piagge, e i colli.
Ond 'io, ch' al piu gran gielo ardo e sfavillo,
Subito corsi; ma si puro adorno
Girsene il vidi, che turbar no'l volli:
Sol mi specchiava, e'n dolce ombrosa sponda
Mi stava intento al mormorar dell' onda.

MADRIGALE.

Aure dell' angoscioso viver mio
Refrigerio soave,
E dolce si, che piu non mi par grave
Ne'l arder, ne'l morir, anz' il desio;
Deh voi'l ghiaccio, e le nubi, e'l tempo rio
Discacciatene omai, che l'onde chiara,
E l' ombra non men cara
A scherzare, e cantar per suoi boschetti
E prati Festa ed Allegrezza alletti.

MADRIGALE.

Pacifiche, ma spesso in amorosa
Guerra co'fiori, e l'erba
Alla stagione acerba
Verde Insegne del giglio e della rosa
Movete, Aure, pian pian: che tregna o posa,
Se non pace, io ritrovo:
E so ben dove—Oh vago, mansueto

pass away, to the poets who have done hŏnour to our own times, and to those of our immediate predecessors.

MADRIGALE.

Sguardo, labbra d'ambrosia, oh rider lieto!
Hor come un Scoglio stassi,
Hor come un Rio se'n fugge
Ed her crud' Orsa rugge,
Hor canta Angelo pio: ma che non fassi
E che non fammi, O Sassi,
O Rivi, o belve, o Dii, questa mia vaga
Non so, se Ninfa, o Maga,
Non so, se Donna, o Dea,
Non so, se dolce o rea?

MADRIGALE.

Piangendo mi baciaste,
E ridendo il negaste:
Indoglia hebbivi pia,
In festa hebbivi ria:
Nacque Gioia di pianti,
Dolor di riso: O amanti
Miseri, habbiate insieme
Ognor Paura e Speme.

MADRIGALE.

Bel Fior, tu mi rimembri
La rugiadosa guancia del bel viso;
E si vera l'assembri,
Che'n te sovente, come in lei m'affiso:
Ed hor dell vago riso,
Hor dell sereno sguardo
Io pur cieco risguardo. Ma qual fugge,
O Rosa, il mattin lieve?
E chi te, come neve,
E'l mio cor teco, e la mia vita strugge.

MADRIGALE.

Anna mia, Anna dolce, oh sempre nuovo
E piu chiaro concento,
Quanta dolcezza sento
In sol Anna dicendo? Io mi par pruovo,
Ne qui tra noi ritruovo,
Ne tra cieli armonia,
Che del bel nome suo piu dolce sia:
Altro il Cielo, altro Amore,
Altro non suona l'Eco del mio core.

MADRIGALE.

Hor che'l prato, e la selva si scolora,
Al tuo Sereno ombroso

Muovine, alto Riposo!
Deh ch 'io riposi una sol notte, un hora!
Han le fere, e gli augelli, ognun talora
Ha qualche pace; io quando,
Lasso! non vonne errando,
E non piango, e non gridо? e qual pur forte?
Ma poiche non sente egli, odine, Morte!

MADRIGALE.

Risi e piansi d'Amor; ne pero mai
Se non in fiamma, o 'n onda, o 'n vento scrissi;
Spesso merce trovai
Crudel; sempre in me morto, in altri vissi!
Hor da' piu scuri abyssi al Ciel m'alzai,
Hor ne pur caddi giuso;
Stanco al fin qui son chiuso!

CHAPTER XVII.

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth—Rustic life (above all, *low* and rustic life,) especially unfavourable to the formation of a human diction—The *best* parts of language the product of philosophers, not clowns or shepherds—Poetry essentially ideal and generic—The language of Milton as much the language of *real* life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.

As far, then, as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the *dramatic* propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stript of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connexion or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and, as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process in which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought, from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of empassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt, and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance, in behalf of truth and nature, were still of perpetual recurrence, before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot, likewise, but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced, not

only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent, the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points, in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner, with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them, at most, as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences, from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory, ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in *any* sense, this rule is applicable only to *certain* classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense as hath never, by any one, (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and, lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is *practicable*; yet as a *rule* it is useless, if not injurious, and therefore, either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen *low and rustic* life; but not *as* low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy *imitation* of the rude, unpolished manners, and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in *fact*, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the *representation*, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an *imitation* as distinguished from a mere *copy*. The

third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority, awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as, for the same purpose, the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes, *actual* clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that *character*. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."

Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as the "Brothers," "Michael," "Ruth," the "Mad Mother," &c. the persons introduced are by no means taken *from low or rustic life*, in the common acceptation of those words; and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes which will, and do produce the same results in *every* state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal, I rank that INDEPENDENCE, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil, for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry, and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious EDUCATION, which has rendered few books familiar but the bible, and the liturgy or hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far *accidental*, that it is the blessing of particular countries, and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of proba-

bility, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk, with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, (Enthusiasmus triumphatus, sec. xxxv.) that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the bible, will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned; the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."

It is, moreover, to be considered, that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, *negations* involve impediments, not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life, a certain vantage ground is pre-requisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life, or by country labours. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants; and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol, be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the *farmers* are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism, concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprizing spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property, that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary, the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are, in general, better educated, and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but, here seems to be the point to which all the lines of difference

converge as to their source and centre. (I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulged in this preface.) I adopt, with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially *ideal*; * that it avoids and excludes all *accident*; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation, must be *representative* of a class; and that the *persons* of poetry must be clothed with *generic* attributes, with the *common* attributes of the class; not with such as one gifted individual might *possibly* possess, but such as from his situation, it is most probable before-hand, that he *would* possess. If my premises are right, and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no *poetic* medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner, in the poem of the "BROTHERS," those of the shepherd of Green-head Gill in the "MICHAEL," have all the veri-similitude and representative quality that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take "MICHAEL," for instance:

> An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb;
> His bodily frame had been from youth to age
> Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,

* Say not that I am recommending abstractions; for these class-characteristics, which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shaksperian Drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence; and Aristotle has, accordingly, required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry, it is the universal truth which is uppermost in the consciousness; in poetry, the individual form, in which the truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of poetry. They neither sought, in comedy, to make us laugh merrily; much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, *slang* phrases for the day, or the clothing of common-place morals in metaphors drawn from the shops, or mechanic occupations of their characters. Nor did they condescend, in tragedy, to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them fac-similes of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to *affect* us indeed; but yet within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness, during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are," and of the peculiar state in which each man *happens* to be, suspending our individual recollections, and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

FRIEND, Pages 251 and 252.

Intense and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence, he had learnt the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone, and oftentimes
When others heeded not, he heard the south
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant highland hills.
The shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
The winds are now devising work for me!
And truly at all times the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summon'd him
Up to the mountains. He had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him and left him on the heights.
So liv'd he, till his eightieth year was pass'd.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breath'd
The common air; the hills which he so oft
Had climb'd with vigorous steps; which had impress'd
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill, or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals whom he had sav'd,
Had fed, or shelter'd, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honourable gains; these fields, these hills,
Which were his living being, even more
Than his own blood—what could they less?—had laid
Strong hold on his affections—were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched at a lower note, as the "HARRY GILL," "IDIOT BOY," &c., the *feelings* are those of human nature in general, though the poet has judiciously laid the *scene* in the country, in order to place *himself* in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In the "Idiot Boy," indeed, the mother's character is not so much a real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandonment by judgment. Hence, the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless; at

least, they are the only plausible objections which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of *ordinary, morbid idiocy*, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He has even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the *boy* is so evenly balanced by the folly of the *mother*, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In the "Thorn," the poet himself acknowledges, in a note, the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man, moderately imaginative, of slow faculties, and deep feelings; "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town, of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men, having nothing to do, become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem, (and the NURSE in Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic *poetry*, if indeed the Nurse itself can be deemed altogether a case in point,) it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dullness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts, (and these form the far larger portion of the whole,) which might as well, or still better, have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;* the seven last lines of the tenth;† and the five following stanzas, with the exception of

* "I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide."

† "Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond,

the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sud-

Which is a little step beyond,
I wish that you would go:
Perhaps, when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

I'll give you the best help I can:
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know.
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still,
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fix'd the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And with this other maid to church
Unthinking Stephen went—
Poor Martha! on that woful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen.
'Tis said a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!

* * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *

Last Christmas, when we talked of this,
Old farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought

den and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory by which the choice of *characters* was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself *need* be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, or as general rule. "The language, too, of these men is adopted, (purified, indeed, from what appears to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust,) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society, and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. To this I reply, that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far re-constructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar, (which are, in essence, no other than the laws of universal logic applied to Psychological materials,) will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions which the rustic has to convey are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer if we add the consideration, (equally im-

> About its mother's heart, and brought
> Her senses back again:
> And when at last her time drew near,
> Her looks were calm, her senses clear.
>
> No more I know, I wish I did,
> And I would tell it all to you;
> For what became of this poor child
> There's none that ever knew:
> And if a child was born or no,
> There's no one that could ever tell;
> And if 'twas born alive or dead,
> There's no one knows, as I have said;
> But some remember well,
> That Martha Ray, about this time,
> Would up the mountain often climb."

portant, though less obvious,) that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey *insulated facts*, either those of his scanty experience, or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those *connections* of things, or those relative *bearings* of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For *facts* are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling *law*, which is the true *being* of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates, the best part of language is formed. For, first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things and modes of action, requisite for his bodily conveniences, would alone be individualized, while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused, general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words, and combinations of words derived from the objects with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the *best* part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though, in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest, which they neither sowed or reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprized at finding so large a number, which, three or four centuries ago, were the ex-

clusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes in the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved, perhaps, the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to *particularize* many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language," (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life, purified from provincialism,) "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets, who think they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;" it may be answered, that the language which he has in view can be attributed to rustics with no greater right than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange. Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder, by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of *folly* and *vanity*, not for that of the *rustic*, but for that of *good sense* and *natural feeling*.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences—"*a selection of the* REAL *language of men*;"—"*the language of these men*, (i. e. men in low and rustic life,) *I propose to myself to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men.*" "*Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference.*" It is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its *individualities*; secondly, the common properties of the

class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of *universal* use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke, differ from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that which every well educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train of thinking natural and proper to conversation,) such he would wish to talk. Neither one or the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real," therefore, we must substitute *ordinary* or *lingua communis*. And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life, than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each, and the result, of course, must be common to all. And, assuredly, the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay, in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman; the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, or barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anterior to cultivation, the lingua communis of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "*in a state of excitement.*" For the nature of a man's words, when he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions, and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind has been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to *create*, but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thought or images, or (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) whatever generalizations of truth or experience the

heat of passion may produce, yet, the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is, indeed, very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage, the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIIIth. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing, assuredly, can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the *apparent* tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater, and of longer endurance, than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind, as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. "*At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, there he fell down dead.*"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose—Origin and elements of metre—Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand; but, likewise, by following the *order* in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now, this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater *disjunction* and *separation* in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that *surview*, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and, by this means, so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza on which I have chanced to open, in the Lyrical Ballads. It is one of the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

> "In distant countries I have been,
> And yet I have not often seen
> A healthy man, a man full grown,
> Weep in the public road alone.
> But such a one, on English ground,
> And in the broad highway I met;
> Along the broad highway he came,
> His cheeks with tears were wet.
> Sturdy he seem'd, though he was sad,
> And in his arms a lamb he had."

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and, of course, not less so in the hamlet and cottage, than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order* in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less *compact* mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before, a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," &c. &c. But when I turn to the following stanza in "The Thorn:"

> "At all times of the day and night,
> This wretched woman thither goes,
> And she is known to every star,
> And every wind that blows:
> And there beside the thorn she sits,
> When the blue day-light's in the skies;
> And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
> Or frosty air is keen and still;
> And to herself she cries,
> Oh misery! Oh misery!
> Oh wo is me! Oh misery!"

And compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in *real* life, from *such* a narrator as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences, I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which MILTON, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair *specimen* of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

"THE VISION AND THE FACULTY DIVINE."

One point, then, alone remains, but that the most important; its examination having been, indeed, my chief inducement for the preceding inquisition. "*There neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition.*" Such is Mr. Wordsworth's assertion. Now, prose itself, at least, in

all argumentative and consecutive works, differs, and ought to differ, from the language of conversation; even as reading ought to differ from talking.* Unless, therefore, the difference denied be that of the mere *words*, as materials common to all styles of writing, and not of the *style* itself, in the universally admitted sense of the term, it might be naturally presumed that there must exist a still greater between the ordonnance of poetic composition and that of prose, than is expected to distinguish prose from ordinary conversation.

There are not, indeed, examples wanting in the history of literature, of apparent paradoxes that have summoned the public wonder, as new and startling truths, but which, on examination, have shrunk into tame and harmless *truisms*; as the eyes of a cat, seen in the dark, have been mistaken for flames of fire. But Mr. Wordsworth is among the last men, to whom a delusion of this kind would be attributed by any one who had enjoyed the slightest opportunity of understanding his mind and character. Where an objection has been anticipated by such an author as natural, his answer to it must needs be interpreted in some sense, which either is, or has been, or is capable of being, controverted. My object then, must be to discover some other meaning for the term "*essential difference*" in this place, exclusive of the indistinction and community of the words themselves. For whether there ought to exist a class of words in the English, in any degree resembling the poetic

* It is no less an error in teachers, than a torment to the poor children, to enforce the necessity of reading as they would talk. In order to cure them of *singing*, as it is called, that is, of too great a difference, the child is made to repeat the words with his eyes from off the book; and then, indeed, his tones resemble talking, as far as his fears, tears, and trembling will permit. But, as soon as the eye is again directed to the printed page, the spell begins anew; for an instinctive sense tells the child's feelings, that to utter its own momentary thoughts, and to recite the written thoughts of another, as of another, and a far wiser than himself, are two widely different things; and, as the two acts are accompanied with widely different feelings, so must they justify different modes of enunciation. Joseph Lancaster, among his other sophistications of the excellent Dr. Bell's invaluable system, cures this fault of *singing*, by hanging fetters and chains on the child, to the music of which one of his school fellows, who walks before, dolefully chaunts out the child's last speech and confession, birth, parentage, and education. And this soul-benumbing ignominy, this unholy and heart-hardening burlesque on the last fearful infliction of outraged law, in pronouncing the sentence to which the stern and familiarized judge not seldom bursts into tears, has been extolled as a happy and ingenious method of remedying—what? and how?—why, one extreme in order to introduce another, scarce less distant from good sense, and certainly likely to have worse moral effects, by enforcing a semblance of petulant ease and self-sufficiency, in repression, and possible after-perversion of the natural feelings. I have to beg Dr. Bell's pardon for this connexion of the two names, but he knows that contrast is no less powerful a cause of association than likeness.

dialect of the Greek and Italian, is a question of very subordinate importance. The number of such words would be small indeed, in our language, and even in the Italian and Greek; they consist not so much of different words, as of slight differences in the *forms* of declining and conjugating the same words; forms, doubtless, which having been, at some period more or less remote, the common grammatic flexions of some tribe or province, had been accidentally appropriated to poetry by the general admiration of certain master intellects, the first established lights of inspiration, to whom that dialect happened to be native.

Essence, in its primary signification, means the principle of *individuation*, the inmost principle of the *possibility* of any thing, *as* that particular thing. It is equivalent to the *idea* of a thing, whenever we use the word idea with philosophic precision. Existence, on the other hand, is distinguished from essence, by the superinduction of *reality*. Thus we speak of the essence, and essential properties of a circle; but we do not therefore assert, that any thing which really *exists* is mathematically circular. Thus, too, without any tautology, we contend for the *existence* of the Supreme Being; that is, for a reality corresponding to the idea. There is, next, a *secondary* use of the word essence, in which it signifies the point or ground of contra-distinction between two modifications of the same substance or subject. Thus we should be allowed to say, that the style of architecture of Westminister Abbey is *essentially* different from that of Saint Paul, even though both had been built with blocks cut into the same form, and from the same quarry. Only in this latter sense of the term must it have been *denied* by Mr. Wordsworth (for in this sense alone is it *affirmed* by the general opinion) that the language of poetry (i. e. the formal construction, or architecture of the words and phrases) is *essentially* different from that of prose. Now the burthen of the proof lies with the oppugner, not with the supporters of the common belief. Mr. Wordsworth, in consequence, assigns, as the proof of his position, "that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose; but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable

passages from almost all the poetical writings even of Milton himself." He then quotes Gray's sonnet—

> "In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
> And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;
> The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
> Or cheerful fields resume their green attire;
> These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
> *A different object do these eyes require;*
> *My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,*
> *And in my breast the imperfect joys expire!*
> Yet morning smiles, the busy race to cheer,
> And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:
> The fields to all their wonted tributes bear,
> To warm their little loves the birds complain.
> *I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*
> *And weep the more, because I weep in vain.*"

and adds the following remark:—"It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value, is the lines printed in italics. It is equally obvious, that except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose."

An idealist defending his system by the fact, that when asleep we often believe ourselves awake, was well answered by his plain neighbour, "Ah, but when awake do we ever believe ourselves asleep?" Things identical must be convertible. The preceding passage seems to rest on a similar sophism. For the question is not, whether there may not occur in prose an order of words, which would be equally proper in a poem; nor whether there are not beautiful lines and sentences of frequent occurrence in good poems, which would be equally becoming, as well as beautiful, in good prose; for neither the one or the other has ever been either denied or doubted by any one. The true question must be, whether there are not modes of expression, a *construction*, and an *order* of sentences, which are in their fit and natural place in a serious prose composition, but would be disproportionate and heterogeneous in metrical poetry; and, vice versa, whether in the language of a serious poem there may not be an arrangement both of words and sentences, and a use and selection of (what are called) *figures of speech*, both as to their kind, their frequency, and their occasions, which, on a subject of equal weight, would be vicious and alien in

correct and manly prose. I contend, that in both cases, this unfitness of each for the place of the other frequently will and ought to exist.

And, first, from the *origin* of metre. This I would trace to the balance in the mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion. It might be easily explained, likewise, in what manner this salutary antagonism is assisted by the very state which it counteracts, and how this balance of antagonists became organized into *metre*, (in the usual acceptation of that term,) by a supervening act of the will and judgment, consciously, and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure. Assuming these principles as the data of our argument, we deduce from them two legitimate conditions, which the critic is entitled to expect in every metrical work. First: that as the *elements* of metre owe their existence to a state of increased excitement, so the metre itself should be accompanied by the natural language of excitement. Secondly: that as these elements are formed into metre *artificially*, by a *voluntary* act, with the design, and for the purpose of blending *delight* with emotion, so the traces of present *volition* should, throughout the metrical language, be proportionally discernible. Now, these two conditions must be reconciled and co-present. There must be, not only a partnership, but a union; an interpenetration of passion and will, of *spontaneous* impulse and of *voluntary* purpose. Again: this union can be manifested only in a frequency of forms and figures of speech, (originally the offspring of passion, but now the adopted children of power,) greater than would be desired or endured where the emotion is not voluntarily encouraged, and kept up for the sake of that pleasure which such emotion, so tempered and mastered by the will, is found capable of communicating. It not only dictates, but of itself tends to produce a more frequent employment of picturesque and vivifying language, than would be natural in any other case in which there did not exist, as there does in the present, a previous and well understood, though tacit, *compact* between the poet and his reader, that the latter is entitled to expect, and the former bound to supply this species and degree of pleasurable excitement. We may, in some measure, apply to this union, the answer of POLIXENES, in the Winter's Tale, to PERDITA'S neglect of the streaked gilly-flowers, because she had heard it said,

"There is an art which in their piedness shares
"With great creating nature.

Pol. Say there be:
"Yet nature is made better by no mean,
"But nature makes that mean. So ev'n that art,
"Which you say adds to nature, is an art
"That nature makes! You see, sweet maid, we marry
"*A gentler scyon to the wildest stock:*
"And make conceive a bark of ruder kind
"By bud of nobler race. This is an art,
"Which does mend nature—change it rather; but
"The art itself is nature."

Secondly, I argue from the EFFECTS of metre. As far as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprise, and by the quick reciprocations of curiosity, still gratified and still re-excited, which are too slight, indeed, to be at any one moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence. As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine, during animated conversation, they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed. Where, therefore, correspondent food and appropriate matter are not provided for the attention and feelings, thus roused, there must needs be a disappointment felt; like that of leaping in the dark from the last step of a stair-case, when we had prepared our muscles for a leap of three or four.

The discussion on the powers of metre in the preface is highly ingenious, and touches at all points on truth. But I cannot find any statement of its powers considered abstractly and separately. On the contrary, Mr. Wordsworth seems always to estimate metre by the powers which it exerts during (and, as I think, in *consequence of*) its combination with other elements of poetry. Thus, the previous difficulty is left unanswered, *what* the elements are with which it must be combined, in order to produce its own effects to any pleasurable purpose. Double and trisyllable rhymes, indeed, form a lower species of wit, and attended to, exclusively for their own sake, may become a source of momentary amusement; as in poor Smart's distich to the Welch 'Squire, who had promised him a hare:

"Tell me, thou son of great Cadwallader!
Hast sent the hare, or hast thou swallow'd her?

But, for any *poetic* purposes, metre resembles (if the aptness of the simile may excuse its meanness) yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vivacity and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionally combined.

The reference to the "Children of the Wood," by no means satisfies my judgment. We all willingly throw ourselves back for a while into the feelings of our childhood. This ballad, therefore, we read under such recollections of our own childish feelings, as would equally endear to us poems which Mr. Wordsworth himself would regard as faulty in the opposite extreme of gaudy and technical ornament. Before the invention of printing, and in a still greater degree before the introduction of writing, metre, especially *alliterative* metre, (whether alliterative at the beginning of the words, as in "Pierce Plouman," or at the end, as in rhymes,) possessed an independent value, as assisting the recollection, and, consequently, the preservation of *any* series of truths or incidents. But I am not convinced by the collation of facts, that the "*Children in the Wood*" owes either its preservation or its popularity to its metrical form. Mr. Marshal's repository affords a number of tales in prose inferior in pathos and general merit, some of as old a date, and many as widely popular. Tom Hickathrift, Jack the Giant-killer, Goody Two-shoes, and Little Red Riding-hood, are formidable rivals. And that they have continued in prose, cannot be fairly explained by the assumption, that the comparative meanness of their thoughts and images precluded even the humblest forms of metre. The scene of Goody Two-shoes in the church is perfectly susceptible of metrical narration; and among the Θαύματα θαυμαζόμενα, even of the present age, I do not recollect a more astonishing image than that of the "*whole rookery, that flew out of the giant's beard,*" scared by the tremendous voice with which this monster answered the challenge of the heroic Tom Hickathrift!

If from these we turn to compositions, universally, and independently of all early associations, beloved and admired, would the Maria, The Monk, or The Poor Man's Ass of Sterne, be read with more delight, or have a better chance of immortality, had they, without any change in the diction, been composed in rhyme, than in the present state? If I am not grossly mistaken, the general reply would be in the negative. Nay, I will confess, that in Mr.

Wordsworth's own volumes, the ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS, SIMON LEE, ALICE FELL, THE BEGGARS, and THE SAILOR'S MOTHER, notwithstanding the beauties which are to be found in each of them, where the poet interposes the music of his own thoughts, would have been more delightful to me in prose, told and managed, as by Mr. Wordsworth they would have been, in a moral essay, or pedestrian tour.

Metre in itself is simply a stimulant of the attention, and therefore excites the question—Why is the attention to be thus stimulated? Now the question cannot be answered by the pleasure of the metre itself; for this we have shown to be *conditional*, and dependent on the appropriateness of the thoughts and expressions, to which the metrical form is superadded. Neither can I conceive any other answer that can be rationally given, short of this: I write in metre, because I am about to use a language different from that of prose. Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting soever the reflections are that are capable of being drawn by a philosophic mind from the thoughts or incidents of the poem, the metre itself must often become feeble. Take the three last stanzas of the SAILOR'S MOTHER, for instance. If I could for a moment abstract from the effect produced on the author's feelings, as a man, by the incident at the time of its real occurrence, I would dare appeal to his own judgment, whether in the *metre* itself he found a sufficient reason for *their* being written *metrically?*

"And thus continuing, she said,
I had a son, who many a day
Sailed on the seas; but he is dead;
In Denmark he was cast away:
And I have travelled far as Hull, to see
What clothes he might have left, or other property.

The bird and cage, they both were his;
'Twas my son's bird; and neat and trim
He kept it; many voyages
This singing bird hath gone with him:
When last he sailed he left the bird behind;
As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care
Had left it, to be watched and fed,
Till he came back again; and there
I found it when my son was dead;
And now, God help me for my little wit!
I trail it with me, Sir! he took so much delight in it."

If disproportioning the emphasis we read these stanzas so as to make the rhymes perceptible, even *trisyllable* rhymes could scarcely produce an equal sense of oddity and strangeness, as we feel here in finding *rhymes at all* in sentences so exclusively colloquial. I would further ask whether, but for that visionary state, into which the figure of the woman and the susceptibility of his own genius had placed the poet's imagination, (a state, which spreads its influence and colouring over all that co-exists with the exciting cause, and in which

> "The simplest, and the most familiar things
> Gain a strange power of spreading awe around them;" *)

I would ask the poet whether he would not have felt an abrupt downfall in these verses from the preceding stanza?

> "The ancient spirit is not dead;
> Old times, thought I, are breathing there!
> Proud was I, that my country bred
> Such strength, a dignity so fair!
> She begged an alms, like one in poor estate;
> I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate."

It must not be omitted, and is, besides, worthy of notice, that those stanzas furnish the only fair instance that I have been able to discover in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings, of an *actual* adoption, or true imitation, of the *real* and *very* language of *low and rustic life*, freed from provincialisms.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre. Metre, therefore, having been connected with *poetry* most often and by a peculiar fitness, whatever else is combined with *metre* must, though it be not itself *essentially* poetic, have nevertheless some property in common

* Altered from the description of Night-Mare in the Remorse:

> "Oh Heaven! 'twas frightful! Now run down and stared at
> By hidious shapes that cannot be remembered;
> Now seeing nothing, and imaging nothing;
> But only being afraid—stifled with fear!
> While every goodly or familar form
> Had a strange power of spreading terror round me:"

N. B. Though Shakspeare has, for his own *all-justifying* purposes, introduced the Night-*Mare* with her own foals, yet Mair means a Sister, or perhaps a Hag.

with poetry, as an intermedium of affinity, a sort (if I may dare borrow a well-known phrase from technical chemistry) of *mordaunt* between it and the superadded metre. Now, poetry, Mr. Wordsworth truly affirms, does always imply PASSION, which word must be here understood in its most general sense, as an excited state of the feelings and faculties. And as every passion has its proper pulse, so will it likewise have its characteristic modes of expression. But where there exists that degree of genius and talent which entitles a writer to aim at the honours of a poet, the very *act* of poetic composition *itself* is, and is *allowed* to imply and to produce, an unusual state of excitement, which, of course, justifies and demands a correspondent difference of language, as truly, though not perhaps in as marked a degree, as the excitement of love, fear, rage, or jealousy. The vividness of the descriptions or declamations in DONNE, or DRYDEN, is as much and as often derived from the force and fervour of the describer, as from the reflections, forms, or incidents, which constitute their subject and materials. The wheels take fire from the mere rapidity of their motion. To what extent, and under what modifications, this may be admitted to act, I shall attempt to define in an after remark on Mr. Wordsworth's reply to this objection, or rather on his objection to this reply, as already anticipated in his preface.

Fourthly, and as intimately connected with this, if not the same argument in a more general form, I adduce the high spiritual instinct of the human being, impelling us to seek unity by harmonious adjustment, and thus establishing the principle, that *all* the parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more *important* and *essential* parts. This and the preceding arguments may be strengthened by the reflection, that the composition of a poem is among the *imitative* arts, and that imitation, as opposed to copying, consists either in the interfusion of the SAME, throughout the radically DIFFERENT, or of the different throughout a base radically the same.

Lastly, I appeal to the practice of the best poets of all countries and in all ages, as *authorizing* the opinion, (*deduced* from all the foregoing,) that in every import of the word ESSENTIAL, which would not here involve a mere truism, there may be, is, and ought to be, an *essential* difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition.

In Mr. Wordsworth's criticism of GRAY's Sonnet, the reader's sympathy with his praise or blame of the different parts is taken for granted, rather perhaps too easily. He has not, at least, attempted to win or compel it by argumentative analysis. In my conception, at least, the lines rejected, as of no value, do, with the exception of the two first, differ as much and as little from the language of common life, as those which he has printed in italics, as possessing genuine excellence. Of the five lines thus honourably distinguished, two of them differ from prose even more widely than the lines which either precede or follow, in the *position* of the words :

> "*A different object do these eyes require;*
> My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
> *And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.*"

But were it otherwise, what would this prove, but a truth, of which no man ever doubted? videlicet, that there are sentences which would be equally in their place, both in verse and prose. Assuredly it does not prove the point, which alone requires proof, namely, that there are not passages which would suit the one, and not suit the other. The first line of this sonnet is distinguished from the ordinary language of men by the epithet to *morning*. (For we will set aside, at present, the consideration that the particular word "*smiling*" is hackneyed, and, (as it involves a sort of personification,) not quite congruous with the common and material attribute of *shining*.) And, doubtless, this adjunction of epithets, for the purpose of additional description, where no particular attention is demanded for the quality of the thing, would be noticed as giving a poetic cast to a man's conversation. Should the sportsman exclaim, "*come, boys! the rosy morning calls you up*," he will be supposed to have some song in his head. But no one suspects this, when he says, "a wet morning shall not confine us to our beds." This, then, is either a defect in poetry, or it is not. Whoever should decide in the *affirmative*, I would request him to reperuse any one poem, of any confessedly great poet, from Homer to Milton, or from Eschylus to Shakspeare, and to strike out (in thought I mean) every instance of this kind. If the number of these fancied erasures did not startle him, or if he continued to deem the work improved by their total omission, he must advance reasons of no ordinary strength and evidence—reasons grounded

in the essence of human nature; otherwise I should not hesitate to consider him as a man not so much *proof against* all authority, as *dead* to it. The second line,

"And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;"

has indeed almost as many faults as words. But then it is a bad line, not because the language is distinct from that of prose, but because it conveys incongruous images; because it confounds the cause and the effect, the real *thing* with the personified *representative* of the thing; in short, because it differs from the language of GOOD SENSE! That the "Phœbus" is hacknied, and a school-boy image, is an *accidental* fault, dependent on the age in which the author wrote, and not deduced from the nature of the thing. That it is part of an exploded mythology, is an objection more deeply grounded. Yet when the torch of ancient learning was re-kindled, so cheering were its beams, that our eldest poets, cut off by christianity from all *accredited* machinery, and deprived of all *acknowledged* guardians and symbols of the great objects of nature, were naturally induced to adopt, as a *poetic* language, those fabulous personages, those forms of the supernatural in nature,* which had given them such dear delight in the poems of their great masters. Nay, even at this day, what scholar of genial taste will not so far sympathise with them, as to read with pleasure in PETRARCH, CHAUCER, or SPENSER, what he would perhaps condemn as puerile in a modern poet?

I remember no poet whose writings would safelier stand the test of Mr. Wordsworth's theory, than SPENSER. Yet will Mr. Wordsworth say, that the style of the following stanzas is either undistinguished from prose, and the language of ordinary life, or, that it is vicious, and that the stanzas are *blots* in the Faery Queen?

"By this the northern waggoner had set
His sevenfod teme behind the steadfast starre,
That was in ocean waves yet never wet,
But firm is fixt and sendeth light from farre
To all that in the wild deep wandering are.
And cheerful chanticleer with his note shrill
Had warned once that Phœbus's fiery carre

* But still more by the mechanical system of philosophy which has needlessly infected our theological opinions; and teaching us to consider the world in its relation to God, as of a building to its mason, leaves the idea of omnipresence a mere abstract notion in the state-room of our reason.

In haste was climbing up the eastern hill,
Full envious that night so long his room did fill."

BOOK I. CAN. 2. ST. 2.

"At last the golden orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,
And Phœbus fresh as brydegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurl'd his glist'ring beams through gloomy ayre;
Which when the wakeful elfe perceived, streightway
He started up, and did him selfe prepayre
In sun-bright armes, and battailous array;
For with that pagan proud he combat will that day."

B. I. CAN. 5. ST. 2.

On the contrary, to how many passages, both in hymn books and in blank verse poems, could I (were it not invidious) direct the reader's attention, the style of which is most *unpoetic*, *because*, and only because, it is the style of *prose?* He will not suppose me capable of having in my mind such verses, as

"I put my hat upon my head,
And walk'd into the strand;
And there I met another man,
Whose hat was in his hand."

To such specimens it would indeed be a fair and full reply, that these lines are not bad, because they are *unpoetic;* but because they are empty of all sense and feeling, and that it were an idle attempt to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is evident that he is not a man. But the sense shall be good and weighty, the language correct and dignified, the subject interesting, and treated with feeling; and yet the style shall, notwithstanding all these merits, be justly blamable as *prosaic*, and solely because the words and the order of the words would find their appropriate place in prose, but are not suitable to *metrical* composition. The "Civil Wars" of Daniel, is an instructive, and even interesting work; but take the following stanzas, (and from the hundred instances which abound, I might probably have selected others far more striking:)

"And to the end we may with better ease
Discern the true discourse, vouchsafe to show
What were the times foregoing near to these,
That these we may with better profit know.
Tell how the world fell into this disease;
And how so great distemperature did grow;

So shall we see with what degrees it came;
How things at full do soon wax out of frame."

"Ten kings had from the Norman conqu'ror reign'd
With intermixt and variable fate,
When England to her greatest height attain'd
Of power, dominion, glory, wealth, and state;
After it had with much ado sustain'd
The violence of princes with debate
For titles, and the often mutinies
Of nobles for their ancient liberties."

"For first the Norman, conqu'ring all by might,
By might was forced to keep what he had got;
Mixing our customs and the form of right
With foreign constitutions, he had brought;
Mastering the mighty, humbling the poorer wight,
By all severest means that could be wrought;
And making the succession doubtful, rent
His new-got state, and left it turbulent."

B. I. ST. VII. VIII. AND IX.

Will it be contended, on the one side, that these lines are mean and senseless? Or on the other, that they are not prosaic, and for *that* reason unpoetic? This poet's well-merited epithet is that of the "*well-languaged Daniel*;" but likewise, and by the consent of his contemporaries no less than of all succeeding critics, the "prosaic Daniel." Yet those, who thus designate this wise and amiable writer, from the frequent incorrespondency of his diction to his metre in the majority of his compositions, not only deem them valuable and interesting on other accounts, but willingly admit, that there are to be found throughout his poems, and especially in his *Epistles*, and in his *Hymen's Triumph*, many and exquisite specimens of that style which, as the *neutral ground* of prose and verse, is common to both. A fine, and almost faultless extract, eminent as for other beauties, so for its perfection in this species of diction, may be seen in LAMB's Dramatic Specimens, &c. a work of various interests from the nature of the selections themselves, (all from the plays of Shakspeare's contemporaries,) and deriving a high additional value from the notes, which are full of just and original criticism, expressed with all the freshness of originality.

Among the possible effects of practical adherence to a theory, that aims to *identify* the style of prose and verse, (if it does, indeed, claim for the latter a yet nearer resemblance to the average style

of men in the viva voce intercourse of real life,) we might anticipate the following, as not the least likely to occur. It will happen, as I have indeed before observed, that the metre itself, the sole acknowledged difference, will occasionally become metre to the eye only. The existence of *prosaisms*, and that they detract from the merit of a poem, *must* at length be conceded, when a number of successive lines can be rendered, even to the most delicate ear, unrecognizable as verse, or as having even been intended for verse, by simply transcribing them as prose; when, if the poem be in blank verse, this can be effected without any alteration, or at most by merely restoring one or two words to their proper places, from which they had been transplanted * for no assignable cause or reason, but that of the author's convenience; but if it be in rhyme, by the mere exchange of the final word of each line for some other of the same meaning, equally appropriate, dignified and euphonic.

The answer or objection in the preface to the anticipated remark, "that metre paves the way to other distinctions," is contained in the following words: "The distinction of rhyme and metre is voluntary and uniform, and not like that produced by (what is called) poetic diction, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which

* As the ingenious gentleman, under the influence of the Tragic Muse, contrived to dislocate, "I wish you a good morning, Sir! Thank you, Sir, and I wish you the same," into two blank verse heroics:

To you a morning good, good Sir! I wish.
You, Sir! I thank: to you the same wish I.

† In those parts of Mr. Wordsworth's works, which I have thoroughly studied, I find fewer instances in which this would be practicable than I have met in many poems, where an approximation of prose has been sedulously, and on system, guarded against. Indeed, excepting the stanzas already quoted from the *Sailor's Mother*, I can recollect but one instance, viz: a short passage of four or five lines in THE BROTHERS, that model of English pastoral, which I never yet read with unclouded eye.—"James, pointing to its summit, over which they had all purposed to return together, informed them that he would wait for them there. They parted, and his comrades passed that way some two hours after, but they did not find him at the appointed place, *a circumstance of which they took no heed*; but one of them going by chance into the house, which at this time was James's house, learnt *there* that nobody had seen him all that day." The only change which has been made is in the position of the little word *there* in two instances, the position in the original being clearly such as is not adopted in ordinary conversation. The other words printed in *italics*, were so marked because, though good and genuine English, they are not the phraseology of common conversation, either in the word put in apposition, or in the connection by the genitive pronoun. Men in general would have said, "but that was a circumstance they paid no attention to, or took no notice of," and the language is, on the theory of the preface, justified only by the narrator's being the *Vicar*. Yet if any ear *could* suspect, that these sentences were ever printed as metre, on those very words alone could the suspicion have been grounded.

no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the reader is utterly at the mercy of the poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion." But is this a *poet*, of whom a poet is speaking? No, surely! rather of a fool or madman; or, at best, of a vain or ignorant phantast! And might not brains so wild and so deficient make just the same havoc with rhymes and metres, as they are supposed to effect with modes and figures of speech? How is the reader at the *mercy* of such men? If he continue to read their nonsense, is it not his own fault? The ultimate end of criticism is much more to establish the principles of writing, than to furnish *rules* how to pass judgment on what has been written by others; if indeed it were possible that the two could be separated. But if it be asked, by what principles the poet is to regulate his own style, if he do not adhere closely to the sort and order of words which he hears in the market, wake, high-road, or plough-field? I reply: by principles, the ignorance or neglect of which would convict him of being no *poet*, but a silly or presumptuous usurper of the name! By the principles of grammar, logic, psychology! In one word, by such a knowledge of the facts, material and spiritual, that most appertain to his art, as, if it have been governed and applied by *good sense*, and rendered instinctive by habit, becomes the representative and reward of our past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions, and acquires the name of TASTE. By what *rule* that does not leave the reader at the poet's mercy, and the poet at his own, is the latter to distinguish between the language suitable to *suppressed*, and the language which is characteristic of *indulged*, anger? Or between that of rage and that of jealousy? Is it obtained by wandering about in search of angry or jealous people in uncultivated society, in order to copy their words? Or not far rather by the power of imagination proceeding upon the *all in each* of human nature? By *meditation*, rather than by *observation*? And by the latter in consequence only of the former? As eyes, for which the former has pre-determined their field of vision, and to which, as to *its* organ, it communicates a microscopic power? There is not, I firmly believe, a man now living, who has from his own inward experience, a clearer intuition than Mr. Wordsworth himself, that the last mentioned are the true sources of *genial* discrimination. Through the same process, and by the same creative agency, will the poet distinguish the degree

and kind of the excitement produced by the very act of poetic composition. As intuitively will he know, what differences of style it at once inspires and justifies; what intermixture of conscious volition is natural to that state; and in what instances such figures and colours of speech degenerate into mere creatures of an arbitrary purpose, cold technical artifices of ornament or connection. For even as truth is its own light and evidence, discovering at once itself and falsehood, so is it the prerogative of poetic genius to distinguish, by parental instinct, its proper offspring from the changelings which the gnomes of vanity or the fairies of fashion may have laid in its cradle, or called by its names. Could a rule be given from *without*, poetry would cease to be poetry, and sink into a mechanical art. It would be μορφωσις not ποιησις. The *rules* of the IMAGINATION are themselves the very powers of growth and production. The *words* to which they are reducible present only the outlines and external appearance of the fruit. A deceptive counterfeit of the superficial form and colours may be elaborated; but the marble peach feels cold and heavy, and *children* only put it to their mouths. We find no difficulty in admitting as excellent, and the legitimate language of poetic fervour self-impassioned, DONNE's apostrophe to the Sun in the second stanza of his "Progress of the Soul."

> "Thee, eye of heaven! this great soul envies not;
> By thy male force is all we have, begot.
> In the first East thou now beginn'st to shine,
> Suck'st early balm and island spices there;
> And wilt anon in thy loose-rein'd career
> At Tagus, Po, Seine, Thames, and Danow dine,
> And see at night this western world of mine:
> Yet hast thou not more nations seen, than she,
> Who before thee one day began to be,
> And, thy frail light being quenched, shall long, long out-live thee!"

Or the next stanza but one:

> "Great destiny, the commissary of God,
> That hast marked out a path and period
> For ev'ry thing! Who, where we offspring took,
> Our ways and ends see'st at one instant: thou
> Knot of all causes! Thou, whose changeless brow
> Ne'er smiles or frowns! O vouchsafe thou to look
> And show my story in thy eternal book," &c.

As little difficulty do we find in excluding from the honours of unaffected warmth and elevation the madness prepense of Pseudo-

poesy, or the startling *hysteric* of weakness ever exerting itself, which bursts on the unprepared reader in sundry odes and apostrophes to abstract terms. Such are the Odes to Jealousy, to Hope, to Oblivion, and the like in Dodsley's collection, and the magazines of that day, which seldom fail to remind me of an Oxford copy of verses on the two SUTTONS, commencing with

"INOCULATION, heavenly maid! descend!"

It is not to be denied that men of undoubted talents, and even poets of true, though not of first rate genius, have, from a mistaken theory, deluded both themselves and others in the opposite extreme. I once read, to a company of sensible and well-educated women, the introductory period of Cowley's preface to his "*Pindaric Odes, written in imitation of the style and manner of the Odes of Pindar.*" "If (says Cowley) a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another; as may appear, when he, that understands not the original, reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving." I then proceeded with his own free version of the second Olympic, composed for the charitable purpose of *rationalizing* the Theban Eagle.

"Queen of all harmonious things,
Dancing words and speaking strings,
What God, what hero, wilt thou sing?
What happy man to equal glories bring?
Begin, begin thy noble choice,
And let the hills around reflect the image of thy voice.
Pisa does to Jove belong,
Jove and Pisa claim thy song.
The fair first-fruits of war, th' Olympic games,
Alcides offer'd up to Jove;
Alcides too thy strings may move!
But oh! what man to join with these can worthy prove?
Join Theron boldly to their sacred names;
Theron the next honour claims;
Theron to no man gives place;
Is first in Pisa's and in Virtue's race;
Theron there, and he alone,
E'en his own swift forefathers has outgone."

One of the company exclaimed, with the full assent of the rest, that if the original were madder than this, it must be incurably mad. I then translated the ode from the Greek, and, as nearly as possi-

ble, word for word; and the impression was, that in the general movement of the periods, in the form of the connections and transitions, and in the sober majesty of lofty sense, it appeared to them to approach more nearly than any other poetry they had heard, to the style of our bible in the prophetic books. The first strophe will suffice as a specimen:

> "Ye harp-controuling hymns! (or) ye hymns the sovereigns of harps!
> What God? what Hero?
> What man shall we celebrate?
> Truly Pisa is of Jove,
> But the Olympiad (or the Olympic games) did Hercules establish,
> The first fruits of the spoils of war.
> But Theron for the four-horsed car,
> That bore victory to him,
> It behooves us now to voice aloud;
> The Just, the Hospitable,
> The Bulwark of Agrigentum,
> Of renowned fathers
> The Flower, even him
> Who preserves his native city erect and safe."

But are such rhetorical caprices condemnable only for their deviation from their language of real life? and are they by no other means to be precluded, but by the rejection of all distinctions between prose and verse, save that of metre? Surely, good sense, and a moderate insight into the constitution of the human mind, would be amply sufficient to prove, that such language and such combinations are the native produce neither of the fancy nor of the imagination; that their operation consists in the excitement of surprise by the juxta-position and *apparent* reconciliation of widely different or incompatible things. As when, for instance, the hills are made to reflect the image of a *voice*. Surely, no unusual taste is requisite to see clearly, and that this compulsory juxta-position is not produced by the presentation of impressive or delightful forms to the inward vision, nor by any sympathy with the modifying powers with which the genius of the poet had united and inspirited all the objects of his thought; that it is therefore a species of *wit*, a pure work of the *will*, and implies a leisure and self-possession both of thought and of feeling, incompatible with the steady fervour of a mind possessed and filled with the grandeur of its subject. To sum up the whole in one sentence: When a poem, or a part of a poem, shall be adduced, which is evidently vicious in the

figures and contexture of its style, yet for the condemnation of which no reason can be assigned, except that it differs from the style in which men actually converse; then, and not till then, can I hold this theory to be either plausible or practicable, or capable of furnishing either rule, guidance, or precaution, that might not, more easily and more safely, as well as more naturally, have been deduced in the author's own mind, from considerations of grammar, logic, and the truth and nature of things, confirmed by the authority of works, whose fame is not of ONE country, nor of ONE age.

CHAPTER XIX.

Continuation—Concerning the real object which, it is probable, Mr. Wordsworth had before him in his critical preface—Elucidation and application of this.

It might appear from some passages in the former part of Mr. Wordsworth's preface, that he meant to confine his theory of style, and the necessity of a close accordance with the actual language of men, to those particular subjects from low and rustic life, which, by way of experiment, he had purposed to naturalize as a new species in our English poetry. But from the train of argument that follows; from the reference to Milton; and from the spirit of his critique on Gray's sonnet, those sentences appear to have been rather courtesies of modesty than actual limitations of his system. Yet so groundless does this system appear on a close examination; and so strange and overwhelming in its consequences,* that I cannot, and I do not, believe that the poet did ever himself adopt it in the unqualified sense in which his expressions have been understood by others, and which, indeed, according to all the common laws of interpretation, they seem to bear. What then did he mean? I apprehend, that in the clear perception, not unaccompanied with disgust or contempt, to the gaudy affectations of a style which passed too current with too many for poetic diction, (though, in truth, it had as little pretensions to poetry as to logic or common sense,) he narrowed his view for the time; and feeling a justifiable preference for the language of nature and of good sense, even in its humblest and least ornamented forms, he suffered himself to express, in terms at once too large and too exclusive, his predilection for a style the most remote possible from the false and showy splendor which he wished to explode. It is possible, that this predilection, at first

* I had in my mind the striking but untranslatable epithet, which the celebrated Mendelossohn applied to the great founder of the Critical Philosophy, "*Der alleszermalmende* KANT," i. e. the all-becrushing, or rather the *all-to-nothing-crushing* KANT. In the facility and force of compound epithets, the German, from the number of its cases and inflections, approaches to the Greek: that language so

"Bless'd in the happy marriage of sweet words."

It is in the woful harshness of its sounds alone that the German need shrink from the comparison.

merely comparative, deviated for a time into direct partiality. But the real object which he had in view was, I doubt not, a species of excellence which had been long before most happily characterized by the judicious and amiable GARVE, whose works are so justly beloved and esteemed by the Germans, in his remarks on GELLERT, (see Sammlung Einiger Abhandlungen von Christian Garve) from which the following is literally translated. "The talent that is required in order to make excellent verses, is perhaps greater than the philosopher is ready to admit, or would find it in his power to acquire: the talent to seek only the apt expression of the thought, and yet to find at the same time with it the rhyme and the metre. Gellert possessed this happy gift, if ever any one of our poets possessed it; and nothing perhaps contributed more to the great and universal impression which his fables made on their first publication, or conduces more to their continued popularity. It was a strange and curious phenomenon, and such as, in Germany, had been previously unheard of, to read verses in which every thing was expressed, just as one would wish to talk, and yet all dignified, attractive and interesting; and all at the same time perfectly correct as to the measure of the syllables and the rhyme. It is certain that poetry, when it has attained this excellence, makes a far greater impression than prose. So much so, indeed, that even the gratification which the very rhymes afford, becomes then no longer a contemptible or trifling gratification."

However novel this phenomenon may have been in Germany at the time of Gellert, it is by no means new, nor yet of recent existence in our language. Spite of the licentiousness with which Spencer occasionally compels the orthography of his words into a subservience to his rhymes, the whole Fairy Queen is an almost continued instance of this beauty. Waller's song, "Go, lovely Rose, &c." is doubtless familiar to most of my readers; but if I had happened to have had by me the Poems of COTTON, more, but far less deservedly, celebrated as the author of Virgil travestied, I should have indulged myself, and, I think, have gratified many who are not acquainted with his serious works, by selecting some admirable specimens of this style. There are not a few poems in that volume, replete with every excellence of thought, image, and passion, which we expect or desire in the poetry of the milder muse; and yet so worded, that the reader sees no one reason either in the selection

or the order of the words, why he might not have said the very same in an appropriate conversation, and cannot conceive how indeed he could have expressed such thoughts otherwise, without loss or injury to his meaning.

But, in truth, our language is, and, from the first dawn of poetry, ever has been, particularly rich in compositions distinguished by this excellence. The final *e*, which is now mute, in Chaucer's age was either sounded or dropt indifferently. We ourselves still use either *beloved* or *belov'd*, according as the rhyme, or measure, or the purpose of more or less solemnity may require. Let the reader, then, only adopt the pronunciation of the poet, and of the court at which he lived, both with respect to the final *e* and to the accentuation of the last syllable, I would then venture to ask what, even in the colloquial language of elegant and unaffected women, (who are the peculiar mistresses of "pure English, and undefiled,") what could we hear more natural, or seemingly more unstudied, than the following stanzas from Chaucer's Troilus and Creseide.

"And after this forth to the gate he went,
Ther as Creseide out rode a full gode paas:
And up and doun there made he many a wente,
And to himself full oft he said, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
As would blisful God now for his joie,
I might her sene agen come into Troie!
And to the yonder hill I gan her guide,
Alas! and there I took of her my leave:
And yond I saw her to her fathir ride;
For sorrow of which mine hearte shall to-cleve;
And hithir home I came when it was eve;
And here I dwel; out-cast from alle joie,
And shall, til I maie sene her efte in Troie.
And of himselfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale and waxen less
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe,
What may it be? who can the sothe guess,
Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?
And al this n' as but his melancholie,
That he had of himselfe suche fantasie.
Another time imaginin he would
That every wight, that passed him by the wey
Had of him routhe, and that they saien should,
I am right sorry, Troilus will die!
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede
As he that strode betwixin hope and drede:

For which him likid in his songis shewe
Th' eucheson of his wo as he best might,
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe,
Somewhat his woefull herte for to light,
And when he was from every mann'is sight
With softe voice he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye may hear:
* * * * * * *
This song when he thus songin had, full soon
He fell again into his sighis olde:
And every night, as was his wonte to done,
He stode the bright moone to beholde
And all his sorrowe to the moone he tolde,
And said: I wis, when thou art hornid newe,
I shall be glad, if al the world be trewe!"

Another exquisite master of this species of style, where the scholar and the poet supplies the material, but the perfect well-bred gentleman the expressions and the arrangement, is George Herbert. As from the nature of the subject, and the too frequent quaintness of the thoughts, his "Temple, or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations," are comparatively but little known, I shall extract two poems. The first is a sonnet, equally admirable for the weight, number, and expression of the thoughts, and for the simple dignity of the language. (Unless, indeed, a fastidious taste should object to the latter half of the sixth line.) The second is a poem of greater length, which I have chosen not only for the present purpose, but, likewise, as a striking example and illustration of an assertion hazarded in a former page of these sketches: namely, that the characteristic fault of our elder poets is the reverse of that which distinguishes too many of our more recent versifiers; the one conveying the most fantastic thoughts in the most correct and natural language; the other in the most fantastic language conveying the most trivial thoughts. The latter is a riddle of words; the former an enigma of thoughts. The one reminds me of an odd passage in Drayton's IDEAS:

SONNET IX.

As other men, so I myself do muse,
Why in this sort I wrest invention so;
And why these *giddy metaphors* I use,
Leaving the path the greater part do go?
I will resolve you: *I am lunatic!*

The other recalls a still odder passage in the "SYNAGOGUE; *or the Shadow of the Temple,*" a connected series of poems in imitation of Herbert's "TEMPLE," and in some editions annexed to it.

O how my mind
Is gravell'd!
Not a thought,
That I can find,
But's ravell'd
All to nought!
Short ends of threds,
And narrow shreds
Of lists;
Knot's snarled ruffs,
Loose broken tufts
Of twists;
Are my torn meditations' ragged clothing,
Which, wound and woven, shape a suite for nothing:
One while I think, and then I am in pain
To think how to unthink that thought again!

Immediately after these burlesque passages, I cannot proceed to the extracts promised, without changing the ludicrous tone of feeling by the interposition of the three following stanzas of Herbert's:

VIRTUE.

Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky:
The dew shall weep thy fall to night,
For thou must dye!

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must dye!

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A nest, where sweets compacted lie:
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must dye!

THE BOSOM-SIN.

A Sonnet, by George Herbert.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round?
Parents first season us; then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,
Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises;
Blessings before hand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;

Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears!
Yet all these fences, and their whole array,
One cunning BOSOM-SIN blows quite away.

LOVE UNKNOWN.

Dear friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad:
And in my faintings, I presume, your love
Will more comply than help. A Lord I had,
And have, of whom some grounds, which may improve,
I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.
To him I brought a dish of fruit one day
And in the middle placed my HEART. But he
(I sigh to say)
Lookt on a servant who did know his eye,
Better than you knew me, or (which is one)
Than I myself. The servant instantly,
Quitting the fruit, seiz'd on my *heart* alone,
And threw it in a font, wherein did fall
A stream of blood, which issued from the side
Of a great rock: I well remember all,
And have good cause: there it was dipt and dy'd,
And washt, and wrung! the very ringing yet
Enforceth tears. *Your heart was foul, I fear.*
Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit
Many a fault, more than my lease will bear;
Yet still ask'd pardon, and was not deny'd.
But you shall hear. After my heart was well,
And clean and fair, as I one eventide,
(I sigh to tell,)
Walkt by myself abroad, I saw a large
And spacious furnace flaming, and thereon
A boiling caldron, round about whose verge
Was in great letters set AFFLICTION.
The greatness show'd the owner. So I went
To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,
Thinking with that, which I did thus present,
To warm his love, which, I did fear, grew cold.
But as my heart did tender it, the man
Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,
And threw my *heart* into the scalding pan;
My heart that brought it (do you understand?)
The *offerer's* heart. *Your heart was hard, I fear.*
Indeed 'tis true. I found a callous matter
Began to spread and to expatiate there:
But with a richer blood than scalding water
I bathed it often, e'en with holy blood,
Which at a board, while many drank bare wine,
A friend did steal into my cup for good,
E'en taken inwardly, and most divine
To supple hardnesses. But at the length

Out of the caldron getting, soon I fled
Unto my house, where to repair the strength
Which I had lost, I hasted to my bed;
But when I thought to sleep out all these faults,
(I sigh to speak,)
I found that some had stuff'd the bed with thoughts,
I would say *thorns*. Dear, could my heart not break,
When with my pleasures even my rest was gone?
Full well I understood who had been there;
For I had given the key to none but one:
It must be he. *Your heart was dull, I fear.*
Indeed a slack and sleepy state of mind
Did oft possess me; so that when I pray'd,
Though my lips went, my heart did stay behind.
But all my scores were by another paid,
Who took my guilt upon him. *Truly, friend;*
For ought I hear, your master shows to you
More favor than you wot of. Mark the end!
The font did only what was old renew:
The caldron suppled what was grown too hard:
The thorns did quicken what was grown too dull:
All did but strive to mend what you had marr'd.
Wherefore be cheer'd, and praise him to the full
Each day, each hour, each moment of the week,
Who fain would have you be now, tender, quick!

CHAPTER XX.

The former subject continued—The neutral style, or that common to Prose and Poetry, exemplified by specimens from Chaucer, Herbert, &c.

I HAVE no fear in declaring my conviction, that the excellence defined and exemplified in the preceding Chapter is not the characteristic excellence of Mr. Wordsworth's style; because I can add with equal sincerity, that it is precluded by higher powers. The praise of uniform adherence to genuine, logical English, is undoubtedly his; nay, laying the main emphasis on the word *uniform*, I will dare add, that of all contemporary poets, it is *his alone*. For in a less absolute sense of the word, I should certainly include Mr. BOWLES, LORD BYRON, and, as to all his later writings, Mr. SOUTHEY, the exceptions in their works being so few and unimportant. But of the specific excellence described in the quotation from Garve, I appear to find more and more undoubted specimens in the work of others; for instance, among the minor poems of Mr. Thomas Moore, and of our illustrious Laureate. To me it will always remain a singular and noticeable fact, that a theory which would establish this *lingua communis*, not only as the best, but as the only commendable style, should have proceeded from a poet whose diction, next to that of Shakspeare and Milton, appears to me of all others the most *individualized* and characteristic. And let it be remembered, too, that I am now interpreting the controverted passages of Mr. W.'s critical preface by the purpose and object which he may be supposed to have intended, rather than by the sense which the words themselves must convey, if they are taken without this allowance.

A person of any taste, who had but studied three or four of Shakspeare's principal plays, would, without the name affixed, scarcely fail to recognize as Shakspeare's, a quotation from any other play, though but of a few lines. A similar peculiarity, though in a less degree, attends Mr. Wordsworth's style, whenever he speaks in his own person; or whenever, though under a feigned name, it is clear that he himself is still speaking, as in the different dramatis personæ of the "RECLUSE." Even in the other poems in which he purposes to be most dramatic, there are few in which it does not occa-

sionally burst forth. The reader might often address the poet in his own words with reference to the persons introduced:

> "It seems, as I retrace the ballad line by line,
> That but half of it is theirs, and the better half is thine."

Who, having been previously acquainted with any considerable portion of Mr. Wordsworth's publications, and having studied them with a full feeling of the author's genius, would not at once claim as Wordsworthian, the little poem on the rainbow?

> "The child is father of the man, &c."

Or in the "Lucy Gray?"

> "No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
> She dwelt on a wide moor;
> *The sweetest thing that ever grew*
> *Beside a human door.*"

Or in the "Idle Shepherd-boys?"

> "Along the river's stony marge
> The sand-lark chants a joyous song;
> The thrush is busy in the wood,
> And carols loud and strong.
> A thousand lambs are on the rock
> All newly born! both earth and sky
> Keep jubilee, and more than all,
> Those boys with their green coronal,
> They never hear the cry,
> That plaintive cry which up the hill
> Comes from the depth of Dungeon Gill."

Need I mention the exquisite description of the Sea Lock in the "Blind Highland Boy." Who but a poet tells a tale in such language to the little ones by the fireside as—

> "Yet had he many a restless dream,
> Both when he heard the eagle's scream,
> And when he heard the torrent's roar,
> And heard the water beat the shore
> Near where their cottage stood.
>
> Beside a lake their cottage stood,
> Not small like ours a peaceful flood;
> But one of mighty size, and strange
> That rough or smooth is full of change
> And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake by night and day,
The great sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills;
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that sweetly ride,
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherd with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands."

I might quote almost the whole of his "RUTH," but take the following stanzas:

"But as you have before been told,
This stripling, sportive gay and bold,
And with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roam'd about with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound,
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse; seem'd allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less to feed voluptuous thought
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
Fair trees and lovely flowers;
The breezes their own languor lent,
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those magic bowers.

Yet in his worst pursuits, I ween,
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent.

For passions, linked to forms so fair
And stately, needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment."

But from Mr. Wordsworth's more elevated compositions, which already form three-fourths of his works; and will, I trust, constitute hereafter a still larger proportion;—from these, whether in rhyme or blank verse, it would be difficult, and almost superfluous, to select instances of a diction peculiarly his own; of a style which cannot be imitated without its being at once recognized, as originating in Mr. Wordsworth. It would not be easy to open on any one of his loftier strains, that does not contain examples of this; and more in proportion as the lines are more excellent, and most like the author. For those who may happen to have been less familiar with his writings, I will give three specimens taken with little choice. The first from the lines on the "BOY OF WINANDER-MERE,"—who

"Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him. And they would shout,
Across the watery vale and shout again
With long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild
Of mirth, and jocund din. And when it chanc'd,
That pauses of deep silence mock'd his skill,
Then sometimes in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
*Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene**

*Mr. Wordsworth's having judiciously adopted "*concourse wild*" in this passage for "*a wild scene*" as it stood in the former edition, encourages me to hazard a remark, which I certainly should not have made in the works of a poet less austerely accurate in the use of words, than he is, to his own great honour. It respects the propriety of the word "*scene*" even in the sentence in which it is retained. DRYDEN, and he only in his more careless verses, was the first, as far as my researches have discovered, who for the convenience of rhyme used this word in the vague sense, which has been since too current, even in our best writers, and which (unfortunately, I think) is given as its first explanation in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary, and therefore would be taken by an incautious reader as its proper sense. In Shakspeare and Milton, the word is never used without some clear reference, proper or metaphorical to the theatre. Thus Milton;

"Cedar and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A Sylvan *scene*; and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody *theatre*
Of stateliest view."

I object to any extension of its meaning, because the word is already more equivocal than might be wished; inasmuch as in the limited use which I recommend, it may still signify two different things; namely, the scenery, and the characters and actions presented on the stage during the presence of particular scenes. It can therefore be preserved from *obscurity* only by keeping the original signification full in the mind. Thus Milton again;

"Prepare thou for another scene."

Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
Into the bosom of the steady lake."

The second shall be that noble imitation of Drayton* (if it was not rather a coincidence) in the "JOANNA."

"When I had gazed perhaps two minute's space,
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laugh'd aloud.
The rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the lady's voice, and laugh'd again!
That ancient woman seated on *Helm-crag*
Was ready with her cavern! *Hammar-scar*,
And the tall steep of SILVER-HOW sent forth
A noise of laughter: southern LOUGHRIGG heard,
And FAIRFIELD answered with a mountain tone,
HELVILLON far into the clear blue sky
Carried the lady's voice!—old SKIDDAW blew
His speaking trumpet!—back out of the clouds
From GLARAMARA southward came the voice:
And KIRKSTONE tossed it from his misty head!"

The third, which is in rhyme, I take from the "Song at the feast of Brougham Castle upon the restoration of Lord Clifford, the shepherd, to the estates of his ancestors."

"Now another day is come
Fitter hopes, and nobler doom:
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book;
Armour rusting in the halls
On the blood of Clifford calls;
Quell the Scot, exclaims the lance!
Bear me to the heart of France
Is the longing of the shield—

* Which COPLAND scarce had spoke, but quickly every hill
Upon her verge that stands, the neighboring valleys fill:
HELVILLON from his height, it through the mountains threw.
From whom as soon again, the sound DUNBALRASE drew,
From whose stone-trophied head, it on the WENDROSS went,
Which, tow'rds the sea again, resounded it to DENT:
That BROADWATER, therewith within her banks astound,
In sailing to the sea told it to EGREMOUND,
Whose buildings, walks, and streets, with echoes loud and long,
Did mightily commend old COPLAND for her song!

DRAYTON'S POLYOLBION: *Song* XXX.

Tell thy name, thou trembling field!
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory!
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored,
Like a re-appearing star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war!"
Alas! the fervent harper did not know,
That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.
Love had he found in huts where poor men lie:
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

The words themselves in the foregoing extracts are, no doubt, sufficiently common, for the greater part. (But in what poem are they not so? if we except a few misadventurous attempts to translate the arts and sciences into verse?) In the "Excursion," the number of polysyllabic (or what the common people call, *dictionary*) words is more than usually great. (And so must it needs be, in proportion to the number and variety of an author's conceptious, and his solicitude to express them with precision.) But are those words *in those places*, commonly employed in real life to express the same thought or outward thing? Are they the style used in the ordinary intercourse of spoken words? No! nor are the modes of connexions: and still less the breaks and transitions. Would any but a poet—at least could any one without being conscious that he had expressed himself with noticeable vivacity—have described a bird singing loud by, "The thrush is *busy* in the wood?" Or have spoken of boys with a string of club-moss round their rusty hats, as the boys, "*with their green coronal?*" Or have translated a beautiful May day, into "*Both earth and sky keep jubilee?*" Or have brought all the different marks and circumstances of a sea-lock before the mind, as the actions of a living and acting power? Or have represented the reflection of the sky in the water, as "*That uncertain heaven received into the bosom of the steady lake?*" Even the grammatical construction is not unfrequently peculiar; as "The wind, the tempest roaring high, the tumult of a tropic sky, might

well be *dangerous food to him*, a youth to whom was given, &c." There is a peculiarity in the frequent use of the ἀσυναρτησίαν (i. e. the omission of the connective particle before the last of several words, or several sentences, used grammatically as single words, all being in the same case, and governing or governed by the same verb) and not less in the construction of words by apposition (*to him a youth.*) In short, were there excluded from Mr. Wordsworth's poetic compositions all that a literal adherence to the theory of his preface *would* exclude, two thirds at least, of the marked beauties of his poetry must be erased. For a far greater number of lines would be sacrificed, than in any other recent poet; because the pleasure received from Wordsworth's poems being less derived either from excitement of curiosity, or the rapid flow of narration, the *striking* passages form a larger proportion of their value. I do not adduce it as a fair criterion of comparative excellence, nor do I even think it such; but merely as matter of fact. I affirm, that from no contemporary writer could so many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are found, for their own independent weight or beauty. From the sphere of my own experience I can bring to my recollection three persons of no every day powers and acquirements, who had read the poems of others with more and more unallayed pleasure, and had thought more highly of their authors, as poets; who yet have confessed to me, that from no modern work had so many passages started up anew in their minds at different times, and as different occasions had awakened a meditative mood.

CHAPTER XXI.

Remarks on the present mode of conducting critical journals.

Long have I wished to see a fair and philosophical inquisition into the character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works; and a positive, not a comparative, appreciation of their *characteristic* excellences, deficiences, and defects. I know no claim, that the mere *opinion* of any individual can have to weigh down the *opinion* of the author himself; against the probability of whose parental partiality we ought to set that of his having thought longer and more deeply on the subject. But I should call that investigation fair and philosophical, in which the critic announces and endeavors to establish the principles, which he holds for the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their application to the different *classes* of poetry. Having thus prepared his canons of criticism for praise and condemnation, he would proceed to particularize the most striking passages to which he deems them applicable, faithfully noticing the frequent or infrequent recurrence of similar merits or defects, and *as* faithfully distinguishing what is characteristic from what is accidental, or a mere flagging of the wing. Then, if his premises be rational, his deductions legitimate, and his conclusions justly applied, the reader, and possibly the poet himself, may adopt his judgment in the light of judgment, and in the independence of free agency. If he has erred, he presents his errors in a definite place and tangible form, and holds the torch and guides the way to their detection.

I most willingly admit, and estimate at a high value, the services which the Edinburgh Review, and others formed afterwards on the same plan, have rendered to society in the diffusion of knowledge. I think the commencement of the Edinburgh Review, an important epoch in periodical criticism; and that it has a claim upon the gratitude of the literary republic, and, indeed, of the reading public at large, for having originated the scheme of reviewing those books only which are susceptible and deserving of argumentative criticism. Not less meritorious, and far more faithfully, and, in general, far more ably executed, is their plan of supplying the vacant

place of the trash of mediocrity, wisely left to sink into oblivion by their own weight, with original essays on the most interesting subjects of the time, religious, or political; in which the titles of the books or pamphlets prefixed furnish only the name and occasion of the disquisition. I do not arraign the keenness or asperity of its damnatory style, in and for itself, as long as the author is addressed or treated as the mere impersonation of the work then under trial. I have no quarrel with them on this account, as long as no personal allusions are admitted, and no recommitment (for new trial) of juvenile performances, that were published, perhaps forgotten, many years before the commencement of the review: since for the forcing back of such works to public notice no motives are easily assignable, but such as are furnished to the critic by his own personal malignity; or what is still worse, by a *habit* of malignity in the form of mere wantonness.

> "No private grudge they need, no personal spite:
> The *viva sectio* is its own delight!
> All enmity, all envy, they disclaim,
> Disinterested thieves of our good name:
> Cool, sober murderers of their neighbor's fame!"
>
> S. T. C

Every censure, every sarcasm respecting a publication which the critic, with the criticised work before him, can make good, is the critic's right. The writer is authorized to reply, but not to complain. Neither can any one prescribe to the critic, how soft or how hard; how friendly or how bitter, shall be the phrases which he is to select for the expression of such reprehension or ridicule. The critic must know what effect it is his object to produce; and with a view to this effect must he weigh his words. But as soon as the critic betrays that he knows more of his author than the author's publications could have told him; as soon as from this more intimate knowledge, elsewhere obtained, he avails himself of the slightest trait *against* the author, his censure instantly becomes personal injury, his sarcasms personal insults. He ceases to be a CRITIC, and takes on him the most contemptible character to which a rational creature can be degraded, that of a gossip, backbiter, and pasquillant: but with this heavy aggravation, that he steals the unquiet, the deforming passions of the World into the Museum; into the very place, which, next to the chapel and oratory, should

be our sanctuary, and secure place of refuge; offers abominations on the altar of the muses; and makes its sacred paling the very circle in which he conjures up the lying and prophane spirit.

This determination of unlicensed personality, and of permitted and legitimate censure (which I owe in part to the illustrious Lessing, himself a model of acute, spirited, sometimes stinging, but always argumentative and honourable criticism) is beyond controversy, the true one: and though I would not myself exercise all the rights of the latter, yet, let but the former be excluded, I submit myself to its exercise in the hands of others, without complaint and without resentment.

Let a communication be formed between any number of learned men in the various branches of science and literature; and whether the President and central committee be in London or Edinburgh, if only they previously lay aside their individuality, and pledge themselves inwardly, as well as ostensibly, to administer judgment according to a constitution and code of laws; and if by grounding this code on the two-fold basis of universal morals and philosophic reason, independent of all foreseen application to particular works and authors, they obtain the right to speak each as the representative of their body corporate; they shall have honor and good wishes from me, and I shall accord to them their fair dignities, though self assumed, not less cheerfully, than if I could inquire concerning them in the herald's office, or turn to them in the book of peerage. However loud may be the outcries for prevented or subverted reputation, however numerous and impatient the complaints of merciless severity and insupportable despotism, I shall neither feel nor utter aught but to the defence and justification of the critical machine. Should any literary Quixote find himself provoked by its sounds and regular movements, I should admonish him with Sancho Panza, that it is no giant, but a windmill; there it stands on its own place, and its own hillock, never goes out of its way to attack any one, and to none and from none either gives or asks assistance. When the public press has poured in any part of its produce between its mill-stones, it grinds it off, one man's sack the same as another, and with whatever wind may happen to be then blowing. All the two and thirty winds are alike its friends. Of the whole wide atmosphere it does not desire a single finger breadth more than what is necessary for its sails to turn round in. But this space

must be left free and unimpeded. Gnats, beetles, wasps, butterflies, and the whole tribe of ephemerals and insignificants, may flit in and out and between; may hum, and buzz, and jarr; may shrill their tiny pipes, and wind their puny horns unchastised and unnoticed. But idlers and bravadoes of larger size and prouder show must beware how they place themselves within its sweep. Much less may they presume to lay hands on the sails, the strength of which is neither greater nor less than as the wind is, which drives them round. Whomsoever the remorseless arm slings aloft, or whirls along with it in the air, he has himself alone to blame; though when the same arm throws him from it, it will more often double than break the force of his fall.

Putting aside the too manifest and too frequent interference of NATIONAL, PARTY, and even PERSONAL predilection or aversion; and reserving for deeper feelings those worse and more criminal intrusions into the sacredness of private life, which not seldom merit legal rather than literary chastisement, the two principal objects and occasions which I find for blame and regret in the conduct of the review in question are: first, its unfaithfulness to its own announced and excellent plan, by subjecting to criticism works neither indecent or immoral, yet of such trifling importance even in point of size and according to the critic's own verdict, so devoid of all merit, as must excite in the most candid mind the suspicion, either that dislike or vindictive feelings were at work, or that there was a cold prudential pre-determination to increase the sale of the review, by flattering the malignant passions of human nature. That I may not myself become subject to the charge which I am bringing against others by an accusation without proof, I refer to the article on Dr. Rennell's sermon, in the very first number of the Edinburgh Review, as an illustration of my meaning. If in looking through all the succeeding volumes the reader should find this a solitary instance, I must submit to that painful forfeiture of esteem, which awaits a groundless or exaggerated charge.

The second point of objection belongs to this review only in common with all other works of periodical criticism; at least, it applies in common to the general system of all, whatever exception there may be in favour of particular articles. Or if it attaches to the Edinburgh Review, and to its only corrival, (the QUARTERLY) with any peculiar force; this results from the superiority of talent, ac-

quirement, and information, which both have so undeniably displayed; and which doubtless deepens the regret, though not the blame. I am referring to the substitution of assertion for argument; to the frequency of arbitrary and sometimes petulant verdicts, not seldom unsupported even by a single quotation from the work condemned, which might at least have explained the critic's meaning, if it did not prove the justice of his sentence. Even where this is not the case, the extracts are too often made, without reference to any general grounds or rules, from which the faultiness or inadmissibility of the qualities attributed, may be deduced; and without any attempt to show, that the qualities *are* attributable to the passage extracted. I have met with such extracts from Mr. Wordsworth's poems, annexed to such assertions, as led me to imagine that the reviewer, having written his critique before he had read the work, had then *pricked with a pin* for passages, wherewith to illustrate the various branches of his preconceived opinions. By what principle of rational choice can we suppose a critic to have been directed (at least in a christian country, and himself, we hope, a christian) who gives the following lines, portraying the fervor of solitary devotion excited by the magnificent display of the Almighty's works, as a proof and example of an author's tendency to *downright ravings*, and absolute unintelligibility.

"O then what soul was his, when on the tops
Of the high mountains he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth,
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces did he read
Unutterable love! Sound needed none,
Nor any *voice* of joy: his spirit drank
The spectacle! sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him. They swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live: they were his life.

(Excursion.)

Can it be expected, that either the author or his admirers, should be induced to pay any serious attention to decisions which prove nothing but the pitiable state of the critic's own taste and sensibility? On opening the Review they see a favorite passage, of the force

and truth of which they had an intuitive certainty in their own inward experience confirmed, if confirmation it could receive, by the sympathy of their most enlightened friends; some of whom, perhaps, even in the world's opinion, hold a higher intellectual rank than the critic himself would presume to claim. And this very passage they find selected as the characteristic effusion of a mind *deserted by reason*: as furnishing evidence that the writer was raving, or he could not have thus strung words together without sense or purpose! No diversity of taste seems capable of explaining such a contrast in judgment.

That I had *over-rated* the merit of a passage or poem; that I had erred concerning the *degree* of its excellence, I might be easily induced to believe or apprehend. But that lines, the sense of which I had analysed and found consonant with all the best convictions of my understanding; and the imagery and diction of which had collected round those convictions my noblest, as well as my most delightful feelings; that I should admit such lines to be mere nonsense or lunacy, is too much for the most ingenious *arguments* to effect. But that such a revolution of taste should be brought about by a few broad assertions, seems little less than impossible. On the contrary, it would require an effort of charity not to dismiss the criticism with the aphorism of the wise man, in animam malevolam sapientia haud intrare potest.

What, then, if this very critic should have cited a large number of single lines, and even of long paragraphs, which he himself acknowledges to possess eminent and original beauty? What if he himself has owned, that beauties as great are scattered in abundance throughout the whole book? And yet, though under this impression, should have commenced his critique in vulgar exultation, with a prophecy meant to secure its own fulfilment? With a "THIS WON'T DO!" What? if after such acknowledgments, extorted from his own judgment, he should proceed from charge to charge of tameness, and raving; flights and flatness; and at length, consigning the author to the house of incurables, should conclude with a strain of rudest contempt, evidently grounded in the distempered state of his own moral associations? Suppose, too, all this done without a single leading principle established or even announced, and without any one attempt at argumentative deduction, though the poet had presented a more than usual opportunity for it, by hav-

ing previously made public his own principles of judgment in poetry, and supported them by a connected train of reasoning!

The office and duty of the poet is to select the most dignified as well as

"The happiest, gayest attitude of things."

The reverse, for in all cases a reverse is possible, is the appropriate business of burlesque and travesty, a predominant taste for which, has been always deemed a mark of a low and degraded mind. When I was at Rome, among many other visits to the tomb of Julius II., I went thither once with a Prussian artist, a man of genius and great vivacity of feeling. As we were gazing on Michael Angelo's MOSES, our conversation turned on the horns and beard of that stupendous statue; of the necessity of each to support the other; of the super-human effect of the former, and the necessity of the existence of both to give a harmony and *integrity* both to the image and the feeling excited by it. Conceive them removed, and the statue would become *un*-natural, without being *super*-natural. We called to mind the horns of the rising sun, and I repeated the noble passage from Taylor's Holy Dying. That horns were the emblem of power and sovereignty among the Eastern nations, and are *still* retained as such in Abyssinia; the Achelous of the ancient Greeks; and the probable ideas and feelings, that originally suggested the mixture of the human and the brute form in the figure, by which they realized the idea of their mysterious Pan, as representing intelligence blended with a darker power, deeper, mightier, and more universal than the conscious intellect of man; than intelligence; —all these thoughts and recollections passed in procession before our minds. My companion, who possessed more than his share of the hatred which his countrymen bore to the French, had just observed to me, "*a Frenchman, Sir! is the only animal in the human shape, that by no possibility can lift itself up to religion or poetry:*" When, lo! two French officers of distinction and rank entered the church! "*Mark you,*" whispered the Prussian, "*the first thing which those scoundrels will notice, (for they will begin by instantly noticing the statue in parts, without one moment's pause of admiration impressed by the whole) will be the horns and the beard. And the associations, which they will immediately connect with them, will be those of a* HE-GOAT *and a* CUCKOLD." Never did man guess more luckily. Had he inherited a portion of the great legislator's

prophetic powers, whose statue we had been contemplating, he could scarcely have uttered words more coincident with the result; for even as he had said so it came to pass.

In the EXCURSION, the poet has introduced an old man, born in humble but not abject circumstances, who had enjoyed more than usual advantages of education, both from books and from the more awful discipline of nature. This person he represents, as having been driven by the restlessness of fervid feelings, and from a craving intellect to an itinerant life; and as having in consequence passed the larger portion of his time, from earliest manhood, in villages and hamlets from door to door,

> "A vagrant merchant bent beneath his load."

Now whether this be a character appropriate to a lofty didactic poem, is, perhaps, questionable. It presents a fair subject for controversy; and the question is to be determined by the congruity or incongruity of such a character, with what shall be proved to be the essential constituents of poetry. But surely the critic, who, passing by all the opportunities which such a mode of life would present to such a man; all the advantages of the liberty of nature, of solitude and of solitary thought; all the varieties of places and seasons, through which his track had lain, with all the varying imagery they bring with them; and, lastly, all the observations of men,

> "Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits,
> Their passions and their feelings,"

which the memory of these yearly journeys must have given and recalled to such a mind—the critic, I say, who, from the multitude of possible associations should pass by all these, in order to fix his attention exclusively on *the pin papers*, and *stay tapes*, which *might* have been among the wares of his pack; this critic, in my opinion, cannot be thought to possess a much higher or much healthier state of moral feeling, than the FRENCHMEN above recorded.

CHAPTER XXII.

The characteristic defects of Wordsworth's poetry, with the principles from which the judgment, that they are defects, is deduced—Their proportion to the beauties—For the greatest part characteristic of his theory only.

If Mr. Wordsworth have set forth principles of poetry which his arguments are insufficient to support, let him and those who have adopted his sentiments be set right by the confutation of those arguments, and by the substitution of more philosophical principles. And still let the due credit be given to the portion and importance of the truths which are blended with his theory; truths, the too exclusive attention to which had occasioned its errors, by tempting him to carry those truths beyond their proper limits. If his mistaken theory have at all influenced his poetic compositions, let the effects be pointed out, and the instances given. But let it likewise be shown, how far the influence has acted: whether diffusively, or only by starts; whether the number and importance of the poems and passages thus infected be great or trifling compared with the sound portion; and, lastly, whether they are inwoven into the texture of his works, or are loose and separable. The result of such a trial would evince, beyond a doubt, what it is high time to announce decisively and aloud, that the *supposed* characteristics of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry, whether admired or reprobated; whether they are simplicity or simpleness; faithful adherence to essential nature, or wilful selections from human nature of its meanest forms and under the least attractive associations; are as little the *real* characteristics of his poetry at large, as of his genius and the constitution of his mind.

In a comparatively small number of poems, he chose to try an experiment; and this experiment we will suppose to have failed. Yet even in these poems it is impossible not to perceive, that the natural *tendency* of the poet's mind is to great objects and elevated conceptions. The poem entitled "Fidelity," is, for the greater part, written in language as unraised and naked as any perhaps in the two volumes. Yet take the following stanza, and compare it with the preceding stanzas of the same poem:

"There sometimes does a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
The crags repeat the Raven's croak
In symphony austere;
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud,
And mists that spread the flying shroud;
And sun-beams: and the sounding blast,
That if it could would hurry past,
But that enormous barrier binds it fast."

Or compare the four last lines of the concluding stanza with the former half:

"Yet proof was plain, that since the day
On which the traveller thus had died,
The dog had watch'd about the spot,
Or by his master's side:
How nourish'd there for such long time
He knows who gave that love sublime,
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate."

Can any candid and intelligent mind hesitate in determining, which of these best represents the tendency and native character of the poet's genius? Will he not decide that the one was so written because the poet *would* so write, and the other because he could not so entirely repress the force and grandeur of his mind, but that he must in some part or other of *every* composition write otherwise? In short, that his only disease is the being out of his element; like the swan, that having amused himself for a while, with crushing the weeds on the river's bank, soon returns to his own majestic movements on its reflecting and sustaining surface. Let it be observed, that I am here supposing the imagined judge, to whom I appeal, to have already decided against the poet's theory, as far as it is different from the principles of the art generally acknowledged.

I cannot here enter into a detailed examination of Mr. Wordsworth's works; but I will attempt to give the main results of my own judgment, after an acquaintance of many years, and repeated perusals. And though, to appreciate the defects of a great mind, it is necessary to understand previously its characteristic excellences, yet I have already expressed myself with sufficient fulness, to preclude most of the ill effects that might arise from my pursuing a contrary arrangement. I will therefore commence with what I deem the prominent *defects* of his poems hitherto published.

The first *characteristic, though only occasional*, defect, which I appear to myself to find in those poems is the INCONSTANCY of the

style. Under this name I refer to the sudden and unprepared transitions from lines or sentences of peculiar felicity, (at all events striking and original) to a style, not only unimpassioned but undistinguished. He sinks too often and too abruptly to that style which I should place in the second division of language, dividing it into the three species; *first*, that which is peculiar to poetry; *second*, that which is only proper in prose; and, *third*, the neutral, or common to both. There have been works, such as Cowley's Essay on Cromwell, in which prose and verse are intermixed (not as in the Consolation of Boetius or the Argenis of Barclay, by the insertion of poems supposed to have been spoken or composed on occasions previously related in prose, but) the poet passing from one to the other, as the nature of his thoughts or his own feelings dictated. Yet this mode of composition does not satisfy a cultivated taste. There is something unpleasant in the being thus obliged to alternate states of feeling so dissimilar, and this too, in a species of writing, the pleasure from which is in part derived from the preparation and previous expectation of the reader. A portion of that aukwardness is felt which hangs upon the introduction of songs in our modern comic operas; and to prevent which the judicious Metastasio (as to whose exquisite *taste* there can be no hesitation, whatever doubts may be entertained as to his *poetic genius*) uniformly placed the ARIA at the end of the scene, at the same time that he almost always raises and impassions the style of the recitative immediately preceding. Even in real life, the difference is great and evident between words used as the *arbitrary marks* of thought, our smooth market-coin of intercourse with the image and superscription worn out by currency, and those which convey pictures, either borrowed from *one* outward object to enliven and particularize some *other*; or used allegorically, to body forth the inward state of the person speaking; or such as are at least the exponents of his peculiar turn and unusual extent of faculty. So much so indeed, that in the social circles of private life we often find a striking use of the latter put a stop to the general flow of conversation, and by the excitement arising from concentred attention, produce a sort of damp and interruption for some minutes after. But in the perusal of works of literary *art*, we *prepare* ourselves for such language; and the business of the writer, like that of a painter whose subject requires unusual splendor and prominence, is so to raise the lower and neutral tints that what

in a different style would be the *commanding* colours, are here used as the means of that gentle *gradation* requisite in order to produce the effect of a *whole*. Where this is not achieved in a poem, the metre merely reminds the reader of his claims, in order to disappoint them; and where this defect occurs frequently, his feelings are alternately startled by anticlimax and hyperclimax.

I refer the reader to the exquisite stanzas cited for another purpose from the blind Highland Boy; and then annex, as being, in my opinion, instances of this *disharmony* in style, the two following:

"And one, the rarest, was a shell,
Which he, poor child, had studied well:
The shell of a green turtle, thin
And hollow;—you might sit therein,
It was so wide and deep."

"Our Highland boy oft visited
The house which held this prize, and led
By choice or chance did thither come
One day, when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred."

Or page 172, vol. I.

"'Tis gone forgotten, *let me do*
My best. There was a smile or two—
I can remember them, I see
The smiles worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby, I must lay thee down:
Thou troublest me with strange alarms!
Smiles hast thou, sweet ones of thine own;
I cannot keep thee in my arms,
For they confound me: *as it is*,
I have forgot those smiles of his!"

Or page 259, vol. I.

"Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest,
And though little troubled with sloth
Drunken lark! thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river,
Pouring out praise to th' Almighty Giver.
Joy and jollity be with us both,
Hearing thee or else some other,
As merry a brother:
I on the earth will go plodding on
By myself, cheerfully, till the day is done."

The incongruity which I appear to find in this passage, is that of the two noble lines in italics with the preceding and following. So vol. II. page 30.

> "Close by a pond, upon the further side
> He stood alone, a minute's space I guess,
> I watched him, he continuing motionless;
> To the pool's further margin then I drew;
> He being all the while before me in full view."

Compare this with a repetition of the same image, in the next stanza but two.

> "And still as I drew near with gentle pace,
> Beside the little pond or moorish flood,
> Motionless as a cloud the old man stood;
> That heareth not the loud winds as they call
> And moveth altogether, if it move at all."

Or, lastly, the second of the three following stanzas, compared both with the first and the third.

> "My former thoughts returned, the fear that kills,
> And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
> Cold, pain, and labor and all fleshly ills;
> And mighty poets in their misery dead.
> But now, perplex'd by what the old man had said,
> My question eagerly did I renew,
> How is it that you live, and what is it you do?
>
> He with a smile did then his tale repeat;
> And said that gathering leeches far and wide
> He travelled: stirring thus about his feet
> The waters of the ponds where they abide.
> "Once I could meet with them on every side,
> "But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
> "Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."
> While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
> The old man's shape, and speech all troubled me:
> In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
> About the weary moors continually,
> Wandering about, alone and silently."

Indeed this fine poem is *especially* characteristic of the author. There is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen. But it would be unjust not to repeat that this defect is only occasional. From a careful reperusal of the two volumes of poems, I doubt whether the objectionable pas-

sages would amount in the whole to one hundred lines; not the eighth part of the number of pages. In the EXCURSION, the feeling of incongruity is seldom excited by the diction of any passage considered in itself, but by the sudden superiority of some other passage forming the context.

The second defect I could generalize with tolerable accuracy, if the reader will pardon an uncouth and new coined word. There is, I should say, not seldom a *matter-of-factness* in certain poems. This may be divided into, *first*, a laborious minuteness and fidelity in the representation of objects, and their positions, as they appeared to the poet himself; *secondly*, the insertion of accidental circumstances, in order to the full explanation of his living characters, their dispositions and actions; which circumstances might be necessary to establish the probability of a statement in real life, where nothing is taken for granted by the hearer, but appears superfluous in poetry, where the reader is willing to believe for his own sake. To this *accidentality* I object, as contravening the essence of poetry, which Aristotle pronounces to be σπουδαιότατον καὶ φιλοσοφικώτατον γενὸς, the most intense, weighty, and philosophical product of human art; adding, as the *reason*, that it is the most catholic and abstract. The following passage from Davenant's prefatory letter to Hobbs, well expresses this truth. "When I considered the actions which I meant to describe (those inferring the persons) I was again persuaded rather to choose those of a former age, than the present; and in a century so far removed as might preserve me from their improper examinations, who know not the requisites of a poem, nor how much pleasure they lose (and even the pleasures of heroic poesy are not unprofitable) who take away the liberty of a poet, and fetter his feet in the shackles of an historian. For why should a poet doubt in story to mend the intrigues of fortune by more delightful conveyances of probable fictions, because austere historians have entered into bond to truth? An obligation which were in poets as foolish and unnecessary, as is the bondage of false martyrs, who lie in chains for a mistaken opinion. *But by this I would imply, that truth, narrative and past, is the idol of historians (who worship a dead thing) and truth operative, and by effects continually alive, is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter, but in reason.*"

For this minute accuracy in the painting of local imagery, the lines in the EXCURSION, p. 96, 97, and 98, may be taken, if not as

a striking instance, yet as an illustration of my meaning. It must be some strong motive (as, for instance, that the description was necessary to the intelligibility of the tale) which could induce me to describe in a number of verses what a draftsman could present to the eye with incomparably greater satisfaction by half a dozen strokes of his pencil, or the painter with as many touches of his brush. Such descriptions too often occasion in the minds of a reader, who is determined to understand his author, a feeling of labour, not very dissimilar to that with which he would construct a diagram, line by line, for a long geometrical proposition. It seems to be like taking the pieces of a dissected map out of its box. We first look at one part, and then at another, then join and dove-tail them; and when the successive acts of attention have been completed, there is a retrogressive effort of mind to behold it as a whole. The Poet should paint to the imagination, not to the fancy; and I know no happier case to exemplify the distinction between these two faculties. Master-pieces of the former mode of poetic painting abound in the writings of Milton, ex. gr.

> "The fig tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
> "But such, as at this day to Indians known
> "In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms
> "Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
> "The bended twigs take root, *and daughters grow*
> "*About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade*
> "*High over-arched, and* ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN:
> "*There oft the Indian Herdsman shunning heat,*
> "*Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds*
> "*At loop holes cut through thicket shade.*"
>
> MILTON, P. L. 9, 1100.

This is *creation* rather than *painting*; or if painting, yet such, and with such co-presence of the whole picture flashed at once upon the eye, as the sun paints in a camera obscura. But the poet must likewise understand and command what Bacon calls the *vestigia communia* of the senses, the latency of all in each, and more especially, as by a magical *pena duplex*, the excitement of vision by sound, and the exponents of sound: thus, "THE ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN," may be almost said to reverse the fable in tradition of the head of Memnon, in the Egyptian statue. Such may be deservedly entitled the *creative words* in the world of imagination.

The second division respects an apparent minute adherence to *matter-of-fact* in character and incidents; *a biographical* attention

to probability, and an *anxiety* of explanation and retrospect. Under this head, I shall deliver with no feigned diffidence, the results of my best reflection on the great point of controversy between Mr. Wordsworth, and his objectors; namely, on THE CHOICE OF HIS CHARACTERS. I have already declared, and, I trust, justified, my utter dissent from the mode of argument which his critics have hitherto employed. To *their* question, why did you choose such a character, or a character from such a rank of life? The Poet might, in my opinion, fairly retort: why, with the conception of my character did you make wilful choice of mean or ludicrous associations not furnished by me, but supplied from your own sickly and fastidious feelings? How was it, indeed, probable, that such arguments could have any weight with an author, whose plan, whose guiding principle and main object it was, to attack and subdue that state of association, which leads us to place the chief value on those things on which man DIFFERS from man, and to forget or disregard the high dignities which belong to HUMAN NATURE, the sense and the feeling which *may* be, and *ought* to be found in *all* ranks? The feelings with which, as christians, we contemplate a mixed congregation rising or kneeling before their common Maker, Mr. Wordsworth would have us entertain at *all* times as men, and as readers; and by the excitement of this lofty, yet prideless impartiality in *poetry*, he might hope to have encouraged its continuance in *real-life*. The praise of good men be his! In real life, and I trust, even in my imagination, I honor a virtuous and wise man without reference to the presence or absence of artificial advantages. Whether in the person of an armed baron, a laurel'd bard, &c. or of an old pedlar or still older leech gatherer, the same qualities of head and heart must claim the same reverence. And even in poetry I am not conscious that I have ever suffered my feelings to be disturbed or offended by any thoughts or images which the poet himself has not presented.

But yet I object, nevertheless, and for the following reasons: First, because the object in view, as an *immediate* object, belongs to the moral philosopher, and would be pursued, not only more appropriately, but in my opinion, with far greater probability of success, in sermons or moral essays, than in an elevated poem. It seems indeed, to destroy the main fundamental distinction, not only between a *poem* and *prose*, but even between philosophy and works of

fiction, inasmuch as it proposes *truth* for its immediate object, instead of *pleasure*. Now, till the blessed time shall come, when truth itself shall be pleasure, and both shall be so united as to be distinguishable in words only, not in feeling, it will remain the poet's office to proceed upon that state of association which actually exists as *general*, instead of attempting first to *make* it what it ought to be, and then to let the pleasure follow. But here is unfortunately, a small *Hysteron-Proteron*. For the communication of pleasure is the introductory means by which alone, the poet must expect to moralize his readers. Secondly: though I were to admit, for a moment, *this* argument to be groundless, yet how is the moral effect to be produced, by merely attaching the name of some low profession to powers which are *least* likely, and to qualities which are assuredly not *more* likely, to be found in it? The poet, speaking in his own person, may at once delight and improve us by sentiments which teach us the independence of goodness, of wisdom, and even of genius, on the favours of fortune. And having made a due reverence before the throne of Antonine, he may bow with equal awe before Epictetus among his fellow-slaves—

> ——————"and rejoice .
> In the plain presence of his dignity."

Who is not at once delighted and improved, when the POET Wordsworth himself exclaims,

> "O many are the poets that are sown
> By Nature; men endowed with highest gifts,
> The vision sent, the faculty divine,
> Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
> Not having e'er, as life advanced, been led
> By circumstance to take unto the height
> The measure of themselves, these favour'd beings
> All but a scatter'd few, live out their time
> Husbanding that which they possess within,
> And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest mind
> Are often those of whom the noisy world
> Hears least."
>
> EXCURSION, B. I.

To use a colloquial phrase, such sentiments in such language, do one's heart good; though I for my part, have not the fullest faith in the *truth* of the observation. On the contrary, I believe the instances to be exceedingly rare; and should feel almost as strong

an objection to introduce such a character in a poetic fiction, as a pair of black swans on a lake in a fancy landscape. When I think how many and how much better books than Homer, or even than Herodotus, Pindar or Eschylus, could have read, are in the power of almost every man, in a country where almost every man is instructed to read and write; and how restless, how difficultly hidden, the powers of genius are; and yet find even in situations the most favorable, according to Mr. Wordsworth, for the formation of a pure and poetic language; in situations which ensure familiarity with the grandest objects of the imagination; but *one* BURNS among the shepherds of *Scotland*, and not a single poet of humble life among those of *English* lakes and mountains; I conclude, that POETIC GENIUS is not only a very delicate but a very rare plant.

But be this as it may, the feelings with which

> "I think of CHATTERTON, the marvellous boy,
> The sleepless soul, that perish'd in his pride:
> Of BURNS, that walk'd in glory and in joy
> Behind his plough upon the mountain-side"—

are widely different from those with which I should read a *poem*, where the author, having occasion for the character of a poet and a philosopher in the fable of his narration, had chosen to make him a *chimney-sweeper;* and then, in order to remove all doubts on the subject, had *invented* an account of his birth, parentage, and education, with all the strange and fortunate accidents which had concurred in making him at once poet, philosopher, and sweep! Nothing but biography can justify this. If it be admissible even in a *Novel*, it must be one in the manner of De Foe's, that were meant to pass for histories, not in the manner of Fielding's; in the life of Moll Flanders, or Colonel Jack, not in a Tom Jones, or even a Joseph Andrews. Much less, then, can it be legitimately introduced in a *poem*, the characters of which, amid the strongest individualization, must still remain representative. The precepts of Horace, on this point, are grounded on the nature both of poetry and of the human mind. They are not more peremptory than wise and prudent. For, in the first place, a deviation from them perplexes the reader's feelings, and all the circumstances which are feigned, in order to make such accidents less improbable, divide and disquiet his faith, rather than aid and support it. Spite of all attempts, the fiction *will* appear, and, unfortunately, not as *fictitious*,

but as *false*. The reader not only *knows* that the sentiments and language are the poet's own, and his own too, in his *artificial* character *as poet;* but, by the fruitless endeavours to make him think the contrary, he is not even suffered to *forget* it. The effect is similar to that produced by an epic poet, when the fable and the characters are *derived* from Scripture history, as in the *Messiah* of *Klopstock*, or in *Cumberland's Calvary;* and not merely *suggested* by it, as in the Paradise Lost of Milton. That *illusion*, contradistinguished from *delusion*, that *negative* faith which simply permits the images presented to work by their own force, without either denial or affirmation of their real existence by the judgment, is rendered impossible by their immediate neighbourhood to words and facts of known and absolute truth. A faith which transcends even historic belief, must absolutely *put out* this mere poetic Analagon of faith, as the summer sun is said to extinguish our household fires when it shines full upon them. What would otherwise have been yielded to as pleasing fiction, is repelled as revolting falsehood. The effect produced in this latter case by the solemn belief of the reader, is in a less degree brought about, in the instances to which I have been objecting, by the baffled attempts of the author to *make* him believe.

Add to all the foregoing, the seeming uselessness both of the project and of the anecdotes from which it is to derive support. Is there one word, for instance, attributed to the pedlar in the EXCURSION, characteristic of a *pedlar?* One sentiment that might not more plausibly, even without the aid of any previous explanation, have proceeded from any wise and beneficent old man, of a rank or profession in which the language of learning and refinement are natural, and to be expected? Need the rank have been at all particularized, where nothing follows which the knowledge of that rank is to explain or illustrate? When, on the contrary, this information renders the man's language, feelings, sentiments, and information, a riddle which must itself be solved by episodes of anecdote? Finally, when this, and this alone, could have induced a genuine *poet* to inweave in a poem of the loftiest style, and on subjects the loftiest and of most universal interest, such minute matters of fact, (not unlike those furnished for the obituary of a magazine by the friends of some obscure *ornament of society lately deceased* in some obscure town, as,

"Among the hills of Athol he was born.
There, on a small hereditary farm,
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
His father dwelt, and died, in poverty;
While he, whose lowly fortune I retrace,
The youngest of three sons, was yet a babe,
A little one—unconscious of their loss.
But 'ere he had outgrown his infant days,
His widow'd mother, for a second mate,
Espoused the teacher of the Village School;
Who on her offspring zealously bestowed
Needful instruction."

"From his sixth year, the boy of whom I speak,
In summer, tended cattle on the hills;
But through the inclement and the perilous days
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired
To his step-father's school."—&c.

For all the admirable passages interposed in this narration might, with trifling alterations, have been far more appropriately, and with far greater verisimilitude, told of a poet in the character of a poet; and without incurring another defect which I shall now mention, and a sufficient illustration of which will have been here anticipated.

Third: an undue predilection for the *dramatic* form in certain poems, from which one or other of two evils result. Either the thoughts and diction are different from that of the poet, and then there arises an incongruity of style; or they are the same and indistinguishable, and then it presents a species of ventriloquism, where two are represented as talking, while, in truth, one man only speaks.

The fourth class of defects is closely connected with the former; but yet are such as arise likewise from an intensity of feeling disproportionate to *such* knowledge and value of the objects described, as can be fairly anticipated of men in general, even of the most cultivated classes; and with which, therefore, few only, and those few particularly circumstanced, can be supposed to sympathise. In this class I comprise occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying instead of progression of thought. As instances, see pages 27, 28, and 62, of the Poems, Vol. I., and the first eighty lines of the Sixth Book of the Excursion.

Fifth, and last: thoughts and images too great for the subject. This is an approximation to what might be called *mental* bombast, as distinguished from verbal; for, as in the latter, there is a dispro-

portion of the expressions to the thoughts, so, in this, there is a disproportion of thought to the circumstance and occasion. This, by-the-by, is a fault of which none but a man of genius is capable. It is the aukwardness and strength of Hercules, with the distaff of Omphale.

It is a well-known fact, that bright colours in motion both make and leave the strongest impressions on the eye. Nothing is more likely, too, than that a vivid image, or visual spectrum, thus originated, may become the link of association in recalling the feelings and images that had accompanied the original impression. But, if we describe this in such lines as

> "They flash upon that inward eye,
> Which is the bliss of solitude!"

in what words shall we describe the joy of retrospection, when the images and virtuous actions of a whole well-spent life, pass before that conscience which is, indeed, the *inward* eye; which is, indeed, the "*bliss of solitude?*" Assuredly we seem to sink most abruptly, not to say burlesquely, and almost as in a *medly* from this couplet to—

> "And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the *daffodils.*" Vol. I. p. 320.

The second instance is from Vol. II., page 12, where the poet, having gone out for a day's tour of pleasure, meets, early in the morning, with a knot of *gypsies*, who had pitched their blanket tents and straw-beds, together with their children and asses, in some field by the road-side. At the close of the day, on his return, our tourist found them in the same place. "Twelve hours," says he,

> "Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours, are gone while I
> Have been a traveller under open sky,
> Much witnessing of change and cheer,
> Yet as I left I find them here!"

Whereat the poet, without seeming to reflect that the poor tawny wanderers might probably have been tramping, for weeks together, through road, lane, over moor and mountain, and, consequently, must have been right glad to rest themselves, their children, and cattle, for one whole day; and overlooking the obvious truth, that

such repose might be quite as necessary for *them* as a walk of the same continuance was pleasing or healthful for the more fortunate poet; expresses his indignation in a series of lines, the diction and imagery of which would have been rather above than below the mark, had they been applied to the immense empire of China, impregressive for thirty centuries:

"The weary SUN betook himself to rest,
Then issued VESPER from the fulgent west,
Outshining, like a visible God,
The glorious path in which he trod!
And now ascending, after one dark hour,
And one night's diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty MOON! this way
She looks, as if at them—but they
Regard not her—Oh, better wrong and strife,
Better vain deeds or evil, than such life!
The silent HEAVENS have goings on:
The STARS have tasks—but *these* have none!"

The last instance of this defect, (for I know no other than these already cited,) is from the Ode, page 351, Vol. II., where, speaking of a child, "a six year's darling of a pigmy size," he thus addresses him:

"Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage! Thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find!
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er the slave;
A presence that is not to be put by!"

Now here, not to stop at the daring spirit of metaphor which connects the epithets "deaf and silent," with the apostrophized *eye:* or (if we are to refer it to the preceding word, philosopher,) the faulty and equivocal syntax of the passage; and without examining the propriety of making a "master *brood* o'er a slave," or the *day* brood *at all;* we will merely ask, what does all this mean? In what sense is a child of that age a *philosopher?* In what sense does he *read* "the eternal deep?" In what sense is he declared to be "*for ever haunted* by the Supreme Being?" or so inspired as

to deserve the splendid titles of a *mighty prophet*, a *blessed seer*? By reflection? by knowledge? by conscious intuition? or by *any* form or modification of consciousness? These would be tidings indeed; but such as would pre-suppose an immediate revelation to the inspired communicator, and require miracles to authenticate his inspiration. Children, at this age, give us no such information of themselves; and at what time were we dipt in the Lethe, which has produced such utter oblivion of a state so godlike? There are many of us that still possess some remembrances, more or less distinct, respecting themselves at six years old; pity that the worthless straws only should float, while treasures, compared with which all the mines of Golconda and Mexico were but straws, should be absorbed by some unknown gulf into some unknown abyss.

But if this be too wild and exorbitant to be suspected as having been the poet's meaning; if these mysterious gifts, faculties, and operations, are *not* accompanied with consciousness, who *else* is conscious of them? or how can it be called the child, if it be no part of the child's conscious being? For aught I know, the thinking Spirit within me may be *substantially* one with the principle of life, and of vital operation. For aught I know, it may be employed as a secondary agent in the marvellous organization and organic movements of my body. But, surely, it would be strange language to say, that *I* construct my *heart!* or that *I* propel the finer influences through my *nerves!* or that *I* compress my brain, and draw the curtains of sleep round my own eyes! SPINOZA and BEHMEN were, on different systems, both Pantheists; and among the ancients there were philosophers, teachers of the EN KAI PAN, who not only taught that God was All, but that this All constituted God. Yet not even these would confound the *part*, *as* a part with the whole, *as* the whole. Nay, in no system is the distinction between the individual and God, between the Modification and the one only Substance, more sharply drawn, than in that of SPINOZA. JACOBI, indeed, relates of LESSING, that after a conversation with him at the house of the poet GLEIM, (the Tyrtæus and Anacreon of the German Parnassus,) in which conversation L. had avowed privately to Jacobi his reluctance to admit any *personal* existence of the Supreme Being, or the *possibility* of personality except in a finite Intellect; and while they were sitting at table, a shower of rain came on unexpectedly. Gleim expressed his regret at the circum-

stance, because they had meant to drink their wine in the garden; upon which Lessing, in one of his half-earnest, half-joking moods, nodded to Jacobi, and said, "It is *I*, perhaps, that am doing *that*," i. e. *raining!* and J. answered, "or perhaps I." Gleim contented himself with staring at them both, without asking for any explanation.

So with regard to this passage. In what sense can the magnificent attributes, above quoted, be appropriated to a *child*, which would not make them equally suitable to a *bee*, or a *dog*, or a *field of corn?* or even to a ship, or to the wind and waves that propel it? The omnipresent Spirit works equally in *them*, as in the child; and the child is equally unconscious of it as they. It cannot surely be, that the four lines, immediately following, are to contain the explanation?

> "To whom the grave
> Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
> Of day, or the warm light;
> A place of thought where we in waiting lie."

Surely, it cannot be that this wonder-rousing apostrophe is but a comment on the little poem of "We are Seven?" that the whole meaning of the passage is reducible to the assertion, that a *child*, who, by the bye, at six years old would have been better instructed in most christian families, has no other notion of death than that of lying in a dark, cold place? And still, I hope, not as *in a place of thought!* not the frightful notion of lying *awake* in his grave! The analogy between death and sleep is too simple, too natural, to render so horrid a belief possible for children; even had they not been in the habit, as all christian children are, of hearing the latter term used to express the former. But if the child's belief be only, that "he is not dead, but sleepeth; wherein does it differ from that of his father and mother, or any other adult and instructed person? To form an idea of a thing's becoming nothing, or of nothing becoming a thing, is impossible to all finite beings alike, of whatever age, and however educated or uneducated. Thus it is with splendid paradoxes in general. If the words are taken in the common sense, they convey an absurdity; and if, in contempt of dictionaries and custom, they are so interpreted as to avoid the absurdity, the meaning dwindles into some bald truism. Thus you must at once

understand the words *contrary* to their common import, in order to arrive at any *sense*; and *according* to their common import, if you are to receive from them any feeling of *sublimity* or *admiration*.

Though the instances of this defect in Mr. Wordsworth's poems are so few, that for themselves it would have been scarcely just to attract the reader's attention toward them; yet I have dwelt on it, and perhaps the more for this very reason. For being so very few, they cannot sensibly detract from the reputation of an author, who is even characterized by the number of profound truths in his writings, which will stand the severest analysis; and yet, few as they are, they are exactly those passages which his *blind* admirers would be most likely, and best able, to imitate. But WORDSWORTH, where he is indeed Wordsworth, may be mimicked by copyists, he may be plundered by plagiarists; but he cannot be imitated, except by those who are not born to be imitators. For without his depth of feeling and his imaginative power, his *sense* would want its vital warmth and peculiarity; and without his strong sense, his *mysticism* would become *sickly*—mere fog and dimness!

To these defects, which, as appears by the extracts, are only occasional, I may oppose, with far less fear of encountering the dissent of any candid and intelligent reader, the following (for the most part correspondent) excellences. First, an austere purity of language, both grammatically and logically; in short, a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning. Of how high value I deem this, and how particularly estimable I hold the example at the present day, has been already stated; and in part, too, the reasons on which I ground both the moral and intellectual importance of habituating ourselves to a strict accuracy of expression. It is noticeable, how limited an acquaintance with the masterpieces of art will suffice to form a correct, and even a sensitive taste, where none but masterpieces have been seen and admired; while, on the other hand, the most correct notions, and the widest acquaintance with the works of excellence of all ages and countries, will not perfectly secure us against the contagious familiarity with the far more numerous offspring of tastelessness or of a perverted taste. If this be the case, as it notoriously is, with the arts of music and painting, much more difficult will it be to avoid the infection of multiplied and daily examples in the practice of an art, which uses words, and words only, as its instruments. In poetry, in which

every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that ultimatum which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style: namely, its *untranslatableness* in words of the same language, without injury to the meaning. Be it observed, however, that I include in the *meaning* of a word, not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls. For language is framed to convey not the object alone, but likewise the character, mood, and intentions of the person who is representing it. In poetry it *is* practicable to preserve the diction, uncorrupted by the affectations and misappropriations, which promiscuous authorship, and reading not promiscuous, only because it is disproportionally most conversant with the compositions of the day, have rendered general. Yet, even to the poet, composing in his own province, it is an arduous work; and as the result and pledge of a watchful good sense, of fine and luminous distinction, and of complete self-possession, may justly claim all the honour which belongs to an attainment equally difficult and valuable, and the more valuable for being rare. It is at *all* times the proper food of the understanding; but, in an age of corrupt eloquence, it is both food and antidote.

In prose, I doubt whether it be even possible to preserve our style, wholly unalloyed by the vicious phraseology which meets us every where, from the sermon to the newspaper, from the harangue of the legislator to the speech from the convivial chair, announcing a *toast* or sentiment. Our chains rattle, even while we are complaining of them. The poems of Boetius rise high in our estimation when we compare them with those of his contemporaries, as Sidonius, Apollinaris, &c. They might even be referred to a purer age, but that the prose in which they are set, as jewels in a crown of lead or iron, betrays the true age of the writer. Much, however, may be effected by education. I believe, not only from grounds of reason, but from having, in great measure, assured myself of the fact by actual though limited experience, that, to a youth, led from his first boyhood to investigate the meaning of every word, and the reason of its choice and position, logic presents itself as an old acquaintance under new names.

On some future occasion more especially demanding such disquisition, I shall attempt to prove the close connection between

veracity and habits of mental accuracy; the beneficial after-effects of verbal precision in the preclusion of fanaticism, which masters the feelings more especially by indistinct watch-words; and to display the advantages which language alone, at least which language with incomparably greater ease and certainty than any other means, presents to the instructor of impressing modes of intellectual energy so constantly, so imperceptibly, and, as it were, by such elements and atoms as to secure in due time the formation of a second nature. When we reflect, that the cultivation of the judgment is a positive command of the moral law, since the reason can give the *principle* alone, and the conscience bears witness only to the *motive*, while the application and effects must depend on the judgment; when we consider, that the greater part of our success and comfort in life depends on distinguishing the similar from the same, that which is peculiar in each thing from that which it has in common with others, so as still to select the most probable, instead of the merely possible or positively unfit, we shall learn to value earnestly, and with a practical seriousness, a mean already prepared for us by nature and society, of teaching the young mind to think well and wisely by the same unremembered process, and with the same never forgotten results, as those by which it is taught to speak and converse. Now, how much warmer the interest, how much more genial the feelings of reality and practicability, and thence how much stronger the impulses to imitation are, which a *contemporary* writer, and especially a contemporary *poet*, excites in youth and commencing manhood, has been treated of in the earlier pages of these sketches. I have only to add, that all the praise which is due to the exertion of such influence for a purpose so important, joined with that which must be claimed for the infrequency of the same excellence in the same perfection, belongs in full right to Mr. WORDSWORTH. I am far, however, from denying that we have poets whose *general* style possesses the same excellence, as Mr. Moore, Lord Byron, Mr. Bowles, and, in all his later and more important works, our laurel-honouring Laureate. But there are none, in whose works I do not appear to myself to find *more* exceptions than in those of Wordsworth. Quotations or specimens would here be wholly out of place, and must be left for the critic who doubts and would invalidate the justice of this eulogy so applied.

The second characteristic excellence of Mr. W.'s works is, a correspondent weight and sanity of the thoughts and sentiments—won, not from books, but from the poet's own meditative observation. They are *fresh*, and have the dew upon them. His muse, at least when in her strength of wing, and when she hovers aloft in her proper element,

> Makes audible a linked lay of truth,
> Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
> Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes! S. T. C.

Even throughout his smaller poems there is scarcely one which is not rendered valuable by some just and original reflection.

See page 26, vol. 2d; or the two following passages in one of his humblest compositions:

> "O Reader! had you in your mind
> Such stores as silent thought can bring,
> O gentle Reader! you would find
> A tale in every thing."

and

> "I have heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
> With coldness still returning:
> Alas! the gratitude of men
> Has oftener left *me* mourning."

or in a still higher strain the six beautiful quatrains, page 134:

> "Thus fares it still in our decay:
> And yet the wiser mind
> Mourns less for what age takes away
> Than what it leaves behind.
>
> The Blackbird in the summer trees,
> The lark upon the hill,
> Let loose their carols when they please:
> Are quiet when they will.
>
> With nature never do *they* wage
> A foolish strife; they see
> A happy youth, and their old age
> Is beautiful and free!
>
> But we are pressed by heavy laws;
> And often, glad no more.
> We wear a face of joy, because
> We have been glad of yore.

If there is one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

or the sonnet on Bonaparte, page 202, vol. 2; or finally, (for a volume would scarce suffice to exhaust the instances,) the last stanza of the poem on the withered Celandine, vol. 2, p. 212.

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
Oh man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things youth needed not."

Both in respect of this and of the former excellence, Mr. Wordsworth strikingly resembles Samuel Daniel, one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethian age, now most causelessly neglected; Samuel Daniel, whose diction bears no mark of time, no distinction of age, which has been, and as long as our language shall last, will be, so far the language of the to-day and for ever, as that it is more intelligible to us than the transitory fashions of our own particular age. A similar praise is due to his sentiments. No frequency of perusal can deprive them of their freshness. For though they are brought into the full day-light of every reader's comprehension, yet are they drawn up from depths which few in any age are privileged to visit, into which few in any age have courage or inclination to descend. If Mr. Wordsworth is not equally with Daniel, alike intelligible to all readers of average understanding in all passages of his works, the comparative difficulty does not arise from the greater impurity of the ore, but from the nature and uses of the metal. A poem is not necessarily obscure, because it does not aim to be popular. It is enough, if a work be perspicuous to those for whom it is written, and

"Fit audience find, though few."

To the "Ode on the intimation of immortality, from recollections of early childhood," the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

"Canzon, io credo, che saranno radi
Che tua ragione intendan bene:
Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto."

"O lyric song, there will be few, think I,
Who may thy import understand aright:
Thou art for *them* so arduous and so high!"

But the ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet cannot be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.

Πολλα δι ὑπ' αγκῶ-
νος ὠκέα βέλη
Ἔνδον ενει φαρέτρας
Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖζιν· ες
Δὲ τὸ παν ερμηνέως
Χατίζει. Σοφος ὁ πολ-
λα εἰδος φυᾶ.
Μαθόντες δὲ, λάβροι
Παγγλωσσίᾳ, κόραχες ὥς
Ἄκραντα γαρύσετον
Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιθα θεῖον.

Third: (and wherein he soars far above Daniel,) the sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs: the frequent curiosa felicitas of his diction, of which I need not here give specimens, having anticipated them in a preceding page. This beauty, and as eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, his rudest assailants have felt themselves compelled to acknowledge and admire.

Fourth: the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions, as taken immediately from nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of nature. Like a green field reflected

in a calm and perfectly transparent lake, the image is distinguished from the reality only by its greater softness and lustre. Like the moisture or the polish on a pebble, genius neither distorts nor false-colours its objects; but, on the contrary, brings out many a vein and many a tint, which escape the eye of common observation, thus raising to the rank of gems what had been often kicked away by the hurrying foot of the traveller on the dusty high road of custom.

Let me refer to the whole description of skating, vol. I. page 42 to 47, especially to the lines,

"So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle: with the din
Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while the distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away."

Or to the poem on the green linnet, vol. I. p. 244. What can be more accurate, yet more lovely, than the two concluding stanzas?

"Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstacies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings
That cover him all over.
While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A brother of the leaves he seems;
When in a moment forth he teems
His little song in gushes:
As if it pleased him to disdain
And mock the form when he did feign
While he was dancing with the train
Of leaves among the bushes."

Or the description of the blue cap, and of the noontide silence, p. 284; or the poem to the cuckoo, p. 299; or, lastly, though I might multiply the references to ten times the number, to the poem so completely Wordsworth's, commencing,

"Three years she grew in sun and shower," &c.

Fifth: a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man; the sympathy indeed of a contemplator, rather than a fellow sufferer or co-mate, (spectator haud particeps,) but of a contemplator, from whose view no difference of rank conceals the sameness of the nature; no injuries of wind or weather, of toil, or even of ignorance, wholly disguise the human face divine. The superscription and the image of the Creator still remain legible to *him* under the dark lines with which guilt or calamity had cancelled or cross-barred it. Here the man and the poet lose and find themselves in each other, the one as glorified, the latter as substantiated. In this mild and philosophic pathos, Wordsworth appears to me without a compeer. Such he *is*: so he *writes*. See vol. I. page 134 to 136, or that most affecting composition, the "Affliction of Margaret —— of ——," page 165 to 168, which no mother, and, if I may judge by my own experience, no parent can read without a tear. Or turn to that genuine lyric, in the former edition, entitled, the 'Mad Mother," page 174 to 178, of which I cannot refrain from quoting two of the stanzas, both of them for their pathos, and the former for the fine transition in the two concluding lines of the stanza, so expressive of that deranged state in which, from the increased sensibility, the sufferer's attention is abruptly drawn off by every trifle, and in the same instant plucked back again by the one despotic thought, and bringing home with it, by the blending, *fusing* power of Imagination and Passion, the alien object to which it had been so abruptly diverted, no longer an alien, but an ally and an inmate.

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!
It cools my blood; it cools my brain:
Thy lips, I feel them, baby! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh! press me with thy little hand;
It loosens something at my chest;
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze, I see, is in the tree;
It comes to cool my babe and me."
"Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest,
'Tis all thine own!—and if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!

My beauty, little child, is flown;
But thou wilt live with me in love;
And what if my poor cheek be brown?
'Tis well for me thou can'st not see
How pale and wan it else would be."

Last, and pre-eminently, I challenge for this poet the gift of IMAGINATION in the highest and strictest sense of the word. In the play of *Fancy*, Wordsworth, to my feelings, is not always graceful, and sometimes *recondite*. The *likeness* is occasionally too strange, or demands too peculiar a point of view, or is such as appears the creature of predetermined research, rather than spontaneous presentation. Indeed, his fancy seldom displays itself, as mere and unmodified fancy. But in imaginative power, he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakspeare and Milton: and yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own. To employ his own words, which are at once an instance and an illustration, he does indeed to all thoughts and to all objects—

"——————————add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream."

I shall select a few examples as most obviously manifesting this faculty; but if I should ever be fortunate enough to render my analysis of imagination, its origin and characters, thoroughly intelligible to the reader, he will scarcely open on a page of this poet's works, without recognising, more or less, the presence and the influences of this faculty.

From the poem on the Yew Trees, vol. I. pages 303, 304.

"But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove:
Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved—
Not uninformed with phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pinal umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes
May meet at noontide—FEAR and trembling HOPE,
SILENCE and FORESIGHT—DEATH, the skeleton,

And TIME, the shadow—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glanamara's inmost caves."

The effect of the old man's figure in the poem of Resignation and Independence, vol. II. page 33.

"While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently."

Or the 8th, 9th, 19th, 26th, 31st and 33d, in the collection of miscellaneous sonnets—the sonnet on the subjugation of Switzerland, page 210, or the last ode from which I especially select the two following stanzas or paragraphs, page 349 to 350.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows;
He sees it in his joy!
The youth who daily further from the east
Must travel, still is nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day."

And page 352 to 354 of the same ode.

"O joy that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest—

Delight and liberty the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence; truths that wake
To perish never:
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

And since it would be unfair to conclude with an extract, which, though highly characteristic, must yet, from the nature of the thoughts and the subject, be interesting, or perhaps intelligible, to but a limited number of readers, I will add from the poet's last published work a passage equally Wordsworthian; of the beauty of which, and of the imaginative power displayed therein, there can be but one opinion and one feeling. See White Doe, page 5.

"Fast the church-yard fills; anon
Look again and they are gone;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the prior's oak!
And scarcely have they disappear'd
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard:—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!

They sing a service which they feel,
For 'tis the sun-rise of their zeal,
And faith and hope are in their prime
In great Eliza's golden time."
A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed without and within;
For though the priest more tranquilly
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
When soft!—the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through yon gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the church-yard ground
And right across the verdant sod
Towards the very house of God;
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary doe!
White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven,
And she is left alone in heaven!
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away—
A glittering ship that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain.
* * * * * * * *
What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and round this pile of state,
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Is through space of open day,
Where the enamoured sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright:
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath.

The following analogy will, I am apprehensive, appear dim and fantastic, but in reading Bartram's Travels, I could not help transcribing the following lines as a sort of allegory, or connected simile and metaphor of Wordsworth's intellect and genius. "The soil is a deep, rich, dark mould, on a deep stratum of tenacious clay; and that on a foundation of rocks, which often break through both

strata, lifting their back above the surface. The trees which chiefly grow here are the gigantic black oak; magnolia magnifloria; fraximus excelsior; platane; and a few stately tulip trees." What Mr. Wordsworth *will* produce, it is not for me to prophecy; but I could pronounce with the liveliest convictions what he is capable of producing. It is the FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM.

The preceding criticism will not, I am aware, avail to overcome the prejudices of those who have made it a business to attack and ridicule Mr. Wordsworth's compositions.

Truth and prudence might be imaged as concentric circles. The poet may perhaps have passed beyond the latter, but he has confined himself far within the bounds of the former, in designating these critics as too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him;—"men of palsied imaginations, in whose minds all healthy action is languid; who, therefore, feel as the many direct them, or with the many are greedy after vicious provocatives."

Let not Mr. Wordsworth be charged with having expressed himself too indignantly, till the wantonness and the systematic and malignant perseverance of the aggressions have been taken into fair consideration. I myself heard the commander in chief of this unmanly warfare make a boast of his private admiration of Wordsworth's genius. I have heard him declare, that whoever came into his room would probably find the Lyrical Ballads lying open on his table, and that (speaking exclusively of those written by Mr. Wordsworth himself) he could nearly repeat the whole of them by heart. *But* a Review, in order to be a saleable article, must be *personal*, *sharp*, and *pointed*; and, *since then*, the Poet has made himself, and with himself all who were, or were supposed to be, his friends and admirers, the object of the critic's revenge—how? by having spoken of a work so conducted in the terms which it deserved! I once heard a clergyman in boots and buckskin avow, that he would cheat his own father *in a horse*. A moral system of a similar nature seems to have been adopted by too many anonymous critics. As we used to say at school, in reviewing, they *make* being rogues: and he, who complains, is to be laughed at for his ignorance of *the game*. With the pen out of their hand they are *honourable men*. They exert, indeed, power (which is to that of the injured party who should attempt to expose their glaring

perversions and mis-statements, as twenty to one) to write down, and (where the author's circumstances permit) to *impoverish* the man, whose learning and genius they themselves in private have repeatedly admitted. They knowingly strive to make it impossible for the man even to publish * any future work, without exposing himself to all the wretchedness of debt and embarrassment. But this is all *in their vocation*, and bating what they do in their *vocation*, "*who can say that black is the white of their eye?*"

So much for the detractors from Wordsworth's merits. On the other hand, much as I might wish for their fuller sympathy, I dare not flatter myself, that the freedom with which I have declared my opinions concerning both his theory and his defects, most of which are more or less connected with his theory either as cause or effect, will be satisfactory or pleasing to *all* the poet's admirers and advocates. More indiscriminate than mine their admiration may be; deeper and more sincere it cannot be. But I have advanced no opinion either for praise or censure, other than as texts introductory to the reasons which compel me to form it. Above all, I was fully convinced that such a criticism was not only wanted, but that, if executed with adequate ability, it must conduce in no mean degree to Mr. Wordsworth's *reputation*. His *fame* belongs to another age, and can neither be accelerated or retarded. How small the proportion of the defects are to the beauties, I have repeatedly declared; and that no one of them originates in deficiency of poetic genius. Had they been more and greater, I should still, as a friend to his literary character in the present age, consider an analytic display of them as *pure gain*; if only it removed, as surely to all reflecting minds even the foregoing analysis must have removed, the strange mistake so slightly grounded, yet so widely and industriously propagated, of Mr. Wordsworth's turn for SIMPLICITY! I am not half as much irritated by hearing his enemies abuse him for vulgarity of style, subject, and conception, as I am disgusted with the gilded side of the same meaning, as displayed by some affected admirers, with whom he is, forsooth, a *sweet, simple poet!* and *so* natural, that little master Charles, and his younger sister, are

* Not many months ago, an eminent bookseller was asked what he thought of ——— ? The answer was, "I have heard his powers very highly spoken of by some of our first-rate men; but I would not have a work of his if any one would give it me: for he is spoken but slightly of, or not at all, in the Quarterly Review; and the Edinburgh, you know, is decided to cut him up!"

so charmed with them, that they play at "Goody Blake," or at "Johnny and Betty Foy!"

Were the collection of poems published with these biographical sketches important enough, (which I am not vain enough to believe,) to deserve such a distinction: EVEN AS I HAVE DONE, SO WOULD I BE DONE UNTO.

For more than eighteen months have the volume of Poems, entitled SIBYLLINE LEAVES, and the present volumes up to this page been printed, and ready for publication. But ere I speak of myself in the tones which are alone natural to me under the circumstances of late years, I would fain present myself to the reader as I was in the first dawn of my literary life:

> When Hope grew round me, like the climbing vine,
> And fruits and foliage not my own seem'd mine!

For this purpose, I have selected from the letters which I wrote home from Germany, those which appeared likely to be most interesting, and at the same time most pertinent to the title of this work.

SATYRANE'S LETTERS.

LETTER I.

On Sunday morning, September 16, 1798, the Hamburg Pacquet set sail from Yarmouth: and I, for the first time in my life, beheld my native land retiring from me. At the moment of its disappearance—in all the kirks, churches, chapels, and meeting-houses, in which the greater number, I hope, of my countrymen were at that time assembled, I will dare question whether there was one more ardent prayer offered up to heaven than that which I then preferred for my country. Now, then, (said I to a gentleman who was standing near me,) we are out of our country. Not yet, not yet! he replied, and pointed to the sea; "This, too, is a Briton's country." This bon mot gave a fillip to my spirits, I rose and looked round on my fellow-passengers, who were all on the deck. We were eighteen in number, videlicit, five Englishmen, an English lady, a French gentleman and his servant, an Hanoverian and his servant, a Prussian, a Swede, two Danes, and a Mulatto boy, a German tailor and his wife, (the smallest couple I ever beheld) and a Jew. We were all on the deck; but in a short time I observed marks of dismay. The lady retired to the cabin in some confusion, and many of the faces round me assumed a very doleful and frog-coloured appearance; and within an hour the number of those on deck was lessened by one half. I was giddy, but not sick, and the giddiness soon went away, but left a feverishness and want of appetite, which I attributed, in great measure, to the *sæva mephitis* of the bilge-water; and it was certainly not decreased by the exportations from the cabin. However, I was well enough to join the ablebodied passengers, one of whom observed, not inaptly, that Momus might have discovered an easier way to see a man's inside than by placing a window in his breast. He needed only have taken a salt-water trip in a pacquet-boat.

I am inclined to believe, that a pacquet is far superior to a stage-coach, as a means of making men open out to each other. In the

latter, the uniformity of posture disposes to dozing, and the definiteness of the period at which the company will separate makes each individual think more of those *to* whom he is going, than of those *with* whom he is going. But at sea, more curiosity is excited, if only on this account, that the pleasant or unpleasant qualities of your companions are of greater importance to you, from the uncertainty how long you may be obliged to house with them. Besides, if you are countrymen, that now begins to form a distinction and a bond of brotherhood; and, if of different countries, there are new incitements of conversation, more to ask and more to communicate. I found that I had interested the Danes in no common degree. I had crept into the boat on the deck and fallen asleep; but was awaked by one of them about three o'clock in the afternoon, who told me that they had been seeking me in every hole and corner, and insisted that I should join their party and drink with them. He talked English with such fluency, as left me wholly unable to account for the singular and even ludicrous incorrectness with which he spoke it. I went, and found some excellent wines and a dessert of grapes with a pine apple. The Danes had christened me Doctor Theology, and dressed as I was all in black, with large shoes and black worsted stockings, I might certainly have passed very well for a Methodist missionary. However, I disclaimed my title. What then may you be? A man of fortune? No!—A merchant? No! A merchant's traveller? No!—A clerk? No!—Un Philosophe, perhaps? It was at that time in my life, in which, of all possible names and characters, I had the greatest disgust to that of "un Philosophe." But I was weary of being questioned, and rather than be nothing, or at best, only the abstract idea of a man, I submitted by a bow, even to the aspersion implied in the word "un Philosophe." The Dane then informed me, that all in the present party were philosophers likewise. Certes we were not of the stoic school. For we drank and talked and sung, till we talked and sung altogether; and then we rose, and danced on the deck a set of dances, which, in *one* sense of the word at least, were very intelligibly and appropriately entitled *reels*. The passengers who lay in the cabin below, in all the agonies of sea-sickness, must have found our bacchanalian merriment

——————————————a tune
Harsh and of dissonant mood for their complaint.

I thought so at the time; and (by way, I suppose, of supporting my newly-assumed philosophical character) I thought, too, how closely the greater number of our virtues are connected with the fear of death, and how little sympathy we bestow on pain, where there is no danger.

The two Danes were brothers. The one was a man with a clear white complexion, white hair, and white eye-brows, looked silly, and nothing that he uttered gave the lie to his looks. The other, whom, by way of eminence, I have called THE DANE, had likewise white hair, but was much shorter than his brother, with slender limbs, and a very thin face slightly pock-fretten. This man convinced me of the justice of an old remark, that many a faithful portrait in our novels and farces has been rashly censured for an outrageous caricature, or perhaps nonenity. I had retired to my station in the boat; he came and seated himself by my side, and appeared not a little tipsey. He commenced the conversation in the most magnific style, and as a sort of pioneering to his own vanity, he flattered me with *such* grossness! The parasites of the old comedy were modest in the comparison. His language and accentuation were so exceedingly singular, that I determined, for once in my life, to take notes of a conversation. Here it follows, somewhat abriged indeed, but in all other respects as accurately as my memory permitted.

THE DANE. Vat imagination! vat language! vat vast science! and vat eyes! vat a milk-vite forehead!—O my heafen! vy, you're a Got!

ANSWER. You do me too much honour, Sir.

THE DANE. O me! if you should dink I is flattering you!—No, no, no! I haf ten tousand a year! Vell—and vat is dat? a mere trifle! I 'ouldnt gif my sincere heart for ten times dhe money.—Yes, you're a Got! I a mere man! But, my dear friend! dhink of me as a man! Is, is—I mean to ask you now, my dear friend—is I not very eloquent? Is I not speak English very fine?

ANSW. Most admirably! Believe me, Sir! I have seldom heard even a native talk so *fluently*.

THE DANE, (*squeezing my hand with great vehemence.*) My *dear* friend! vat an affection and fidelity we have for each odher! But tell me, do tell me—Is I not, now and den, speak some fault? Is I not in some wrong?

ANSW. Why, sir, perhaps it might be observed by nice critics in the English language, that you occasionally use the word "is" instead of "am." In our best companies, we generally say I am, and not I is, or Ise. Excuse me, Sir! It is a mere trifle.

THE DANE. O! is, is, am, am, am. Yes, yes—I know, I know.

ANSW. I am, thou art, he is, we are, ye are, they are.

THE DANE. Yes, yes,—I know, I know—Am, am, am, is de presens, and is, is de perfectum—yes, yes—and are, is dhe plusquam perfectum.

ANSW. And "art," Sir, is——

THE DANE. My dear friend! it is dhe plusquam perfectum, no, no—dhat is a great lie. "Are" is the plusquam perfectum—and "art" is dhe plusquam plueperfectum—(*then swinging my hand to and fro, and cocking his little bright hazel eyes at me that danced with vanity and wine.*) You see, my dear friend! that I too have some lehrning.

ANSW. Learning, Sir? Who dares suspect it? Who can listen to you for a minute; who can even look at you, without perceiving the extent of it?

THE DANE. My *dear* friend!—(*then, with a would be humble look, and in a tone of voice, as if he was reasoning*)—I could not talk so of presens and imperfectum, and futurum and plusquamplue perfectum, and all dhat, my dear friend! without *some* lehrning?

ANSW. Sir! a man like you cannot talk on any subject without discovering the depth of his information.

THE DANE. Dhe grammatic Greek, my friend! ha! ha! ha! (*laughing, and swinging my hand to and fro,—then, with a sudden transition to great solemnity.*) Now I will tell you, my dear friend! Dhere did happen about me vat de whole historia of Denmark record no instance about nobody else. Dhe bishop did ask me all dhe questions about all dhe religion in dhe Latin grammar.

ANSW. The grammar, Sir? The language I presume—

THE DANE. (*a little offended.*) Grammar is language, and language is grammar—

ANSW. Ten thousand pardons!

THE DANE. Vell, and I was only fourteen years—

ANSW. Only fourteen years old?

THE DANE. No more. I was fourteen years old—and he asked me all questions, religion and philosophy, and all in dhe Latin

language—and I answered him all every one, my dear friend! all in dhe Latin language.

ANSW. A prodigy! an absolute prodigy!

THE DANE. No, no, no! he was a bishop, a great superintendant.

ANSW. Yes! a bishop.

THE DANE. A bishop—not a mere predicant, not a prediger—

ANSW. My dear Sir! we have misunderstood each other. I said that your answering in Latin at so early an age, was a prodigy, that is, a thing that is wonderful, that does not often happen.

THE DANE. Often! Dhere is not von instance recorded in dhe whole historia of Denmark.

ANSW. And since then, Sir——?

THE DANE. I was sent ofer to dhe Vest Indies—to our island, and dhere I had no more to do vid books. No! no! I put my genius another way—and I haf made ten tousand pound a year. Is not dhat *ghenius*, my dear friend!—But vat is money! I dhink the poorest man alive my equal. Yes, my dear friend! my little fortune is pleasant to my generous heart, because I can do good—no man with so little a fortune ever did so much generosity—no person, no man person, no woman person ever denies it. But we are all Got's children.

Here the Hanoverian interrupted him, and the other Dane, the Swede, and the Prussian, joined us, together with a young Englishman who spoke the German fluently, and interpreted to me many of the Prussian's jokes. The Prussian was a travelling merchant, turned of three score, a hale man, tall, strong, and stout, full of stories, gesticulations, and buffoonery, with the soul as well as the look, of a mountebank, who, while he is making you laugh, picks your pocket. Amid all his droll looks and droll gestures, there remained one look untouched by laughter; and that one look was the true face, the others were but its mask. The Hanoverian was a pale, fat, bloated young man, whose father had made a large fortune in London, as an army contractor. He seemed to emulate the manners of young Englishmen of fortune. He was a good natured fellow, not without information or literature, but a most egregious coxcomb. He had been in the habit of attending the House of Commons, and had once spoken, as he informed me, with great applause in a debating society. For this he appeared to have qualified himself with lauda-

black-eyed Mulatto, had a good-natured round face, exactly the colour of the skin of the walnut-kernel. The Dane and I were ble industry, for he was perfect in Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, and with an accent which forcibly reminded me of the Scotchman in Roderic Random, who professed to teach the English pronunciation, he was constantly *deferring* to my superior judgment, whether or no I had pronounced this or that word with propriety, or "the true delicacy." When he spoke, though it were only half a dozen sentences, he always rose; for which I could detect no other motive than his partiality to that elegant phrase so liberally introduced in the orations of our British legislators, "While I am on my legs." The Swede, whom for reasons that will soon appear, I shall distinguish by the name of "Nobility," was a strong-featured, scurvy faced man, his complexion resembling in color, a red hot poker beginning to cool. He appeared miserably dependant on the Dane, but was, however, incomparably, the best informed, and most rational of the party. Indeed, his manners and conversation discovered him to be both a man of the world and a gentleman. The Jew was in the hold; the French gentleman was lying on the deck, so ill that I could observe nothing concerning him, except the affectionate attentions of his servant to him. The poor fellow was very sick himself, and every now and then ran to the side of the vessel, still keeping his eye on his master but returned in a moment and seated himself again by him, now supporting his head, now wiping his forehead, and talking to him all the while, in the most soothing tones. There had been a matrimonial squabble of a very ludicrous kind in the cabin, between the little German tailor and his little wife. He had secured two beds, one for himself, and one for her. This had struck the little woman as a very cruel action; she insisted upon their having but one, and assured the mate, in the most piteous tones, that she was his lawful wife. The mate and the cabin boy decided in her favor, abused the little man for his want of tenderness with much humour, and hoisted him into the same compartment with his sea sick wife. This quarrel was interesting to me, as it procured me a bed which I otherwise should not have had.

In the evening, at 7 o'clock, the sea rolled higher, and the Dane, by means of the greater agitation, eliminated enough of what he had been swallowing to make room for a great deal more. His favor-

ite potation was sugar and brandy, i. e. a very little warm water with a large quantity of brandy, sugar, and nutmeg. His servant boy, a again seated tete-a-tete in the ship's boat. The conversation, which was now, indeed, rather an oration than a dialogue, became extravagant beyond all that I ever heard. He told me that he had made a large fortune in the island of Santa Cruz, and was now returning to Denmark to enjoy it. He expatiated on the style in which he meant to live, and the great undertakings which he proposed to himself to commence, till the brandy aiding his vanity, and his vanity and garrulity aiding the brandy, he talked like a madman —entreated me to accompany him to Denmark—there I should see his influence with the government, and he would introduce me to the king, &c. &c. Thus he went on dreaming aloud, and then passing with a very lyrical transition to the subject of general politics, he declaimed, like a member of the Corresponding Society, *about*, (not concerning) the Rights of man, and assured me that notwithstanding his fortune, he thought the poorest man alive his equal. "All are equal, my dear friend! all are equal! Ve are all Got's children. The poorest man haf the same rights with me. Jack! Jack! some more sugar and brandy. Dhere is dhat fellow now! He is a Mulatto—but he is my equal. That's right, Jack! (*taking the sugar and brandy.*) Here you Sir! shake hands with dhis gentleman! Shake hands with me, you dog! Dhere, dhere!—We are all equal my dear friend! Do I not speak like Socrates, and Plato, and Cato—they were all philosophers, my dear philosophe! all very great men!—and so was Homer and Virgil—but they were poets, yes, yes! I know all about it!—But what can any body say more than this? we are all equal, all Got's children. I haf ten tousand a year, but I am no more than the meanest man alive. I haf no pride; and yet, my dear friend! I can say do! and it is done. Ha! ha! ha! my dear friend! Now dhere is dhat gentleman, (*pointing* to "Nobility,") he is a Swedish Baron—you shall see. Ho! (*calling to the Swede*) get me, will you, a bottle of wine from the cabin. *Swede.*—Here Jack! go and get your master a bottle of wine from the cabin! *Dane.* No, no, no! do *you* go now—you go yourself—*you* go now! *Swede.* Pah!—*Dane.* Now go? Go, I pray you. AND THE SWEDE WENT.

After this, the Dane commenced an harangue on religion, and

mistaking me for "un philosophe" in the continental sense of the word, he talked of Deity in a declamatory style, very much resembling the devotional rants of that rude blunderer, Mr. Thomas Paine, in his Age of Reason, and whispered in my ear, what damned *hypocrism* all Jesus Christ's business was. I dare aver, that few men have less reason to charge themselves with indulging in *persiflage* than myself. I should hate it if it were only that it is a Frenchman's vice, and feel a pride in avoiding it because our own language is too honest to have a word to express it. But in this instance, the temptation had been too powerful, and I have placed it on the list of my offences. Pericles answered one of his dearest friends, who had solicited him on a case of life and death, to take an equivocal oath for his preservation: *Debeo amicis opitulari, sed usque ad Deos.** Friendship herself must place her last and boldest step on this side the altar. What Pericles would not do to save a friend's life, you may be assured I would not hazard, merely to mill the chocolate-pot of a drunken fool's vanity till it frothed over. Assuming a serious look, I professed myself a believer, and sunk at once an hundred fathoms in his good graces. He retired to his cabin, and I wrapped myself up in my great coat and looked at the water. A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then, light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight, like a Tartar troop over a wilderness.

It was cold, the cabin was at open war with my olfactories, and I found reason to rejoice in my great coat, a weighty, high-caped, respectable rug, the collar of which turned over, and played the part of a nightcap very passably. In looking up at two or three bright stars, which oscillated with the motion of the sails, I fell asleep, but was awakened at one o'clock, Monday morning, by a shower of rain. I found myself compelled to go down into the cabin, where I slept very soundly, and awoke with a very good appetite, at breakfast time, my nostrils, the most placable of all the senses, reconciled to, or, indeed, insensible of the mephitis.

Monday, September 17th, I had a long conversation with the

* *Translation.* It behooves me to side with my friends, but only as far as the gods.

Swede, who spoke with the most poignant contempt of the Dane, whom he described as a fool, purse-mad; but he confirmed the boasts of the Dane respecting the largeness of his fortune, which he had acquired in the first instance as an advocate, and afterwards as a planter. From the Dane, and from himself, I collected, that he was indeed a Swedish nobleman, who had squandered a fortune that was never very large, and had made over his property to the Dane, on whom he was now utterly dependent. He seemed to suffer very little pain from the Dane's insolence. He was in a high degree humane and attentive to the English lady, who suffered most fearfully, and for whom he performed many little offices with a tenderness and delicacy which seemed to prove real goodness of heart. Indeed his general manners and conversation were not only pleasing, but even interesting; and I struggled to believe his insensibility, respecting the Dane, philosophical fortitude. For, though the Dane was now quite sober, his character oozed out of him at every pore. And after dinner, when he was again flushed with wine, every quarter of an hour, or perhaps oftener, he would shout out to the Swede, "Ho! Nobility, go—do such a thing! Mr. Nobility! tell the gentlemen such a story, and so forth," with an insolence which must have excited disgust and detestation, if his vulgar rants on the sacred rights of equality, joined to this wild havoc of general grammar, no less than of the English language, had not rendered it so irresistibly laughable.

At four o'clock, I observed a wild duck swimming on the waves, a single solitary wild duck. It is not easy to conceive, how interesting a thing it looked in that round, objectless desert of waters. I had associated such a feeling of immensity with the ocean, that I felt exceedingly disappointed, when I was out of sight of all land, at the narrowness and *nearness*, as it were, of the circle of the horizon. So little are images capable of satisfying the obscure feelings connected with words. In the evening the sails were lowered, lest we should run foul of the land, which can be seen only at a small distance. At four o'clock, on Tuesday morning, I was awakened by the cry of land! land! It was an ugly island, rock at a distance on our left, called Heiligeland, well known to many passengers from Yarmouth to Hamburg, who have been obliged, by stormy weather, to pass weeks and weeks in weary captivity on it, stripped of all their money by the exhorbitant demands of the wretch-

es who inhabit it. So, at least, the sailors informed me. About nine o'clock we saw the main land, which seemed scarcely able to hold its head above water, low, flat, and dreary, with light-houses and land-marks, which seemed to give a character and language to the dreariness. We entered the mouth of the Elbe, passing Neuwerk; though as yet, the right bank only of the river was visible to us. On this I saw a church, and thanked God for my safe voyage, not without affectionate thoughts of those I had left in England. At eleven o'clock on the same morning, we arrived at Cuxhaven, the ship dropped anchor, and the boat was hoisted out to carry the Hanoverian and a few others on shore. The captain agreed to take us, who remained, to Hamburg for ten guineas, to which the Dane contributed so largely, that the other passengers paid but half a guinea each. Accordingly, we hauled anchor, and passed gently up the river. At Cuxhaven both sides of the river may be seen in clear weather; we could now see the right bank only. We passed a multitude of English traders that had been waiting many weeks for a wind. In a short time both banks became visible, both flat, and evidencing the labor of human hands, by their extreme neatness. On the left bank I saw a church or two in the distance; on the right bank we passed by steeple and windmill, and cottage, and windmill and single house, windmill and windmill, and neat single house, and steeple. These were the objects, and in the succession. The shores were very green, and planted with trees not inelegantly. Thirty-five miles from Cuxhaven, the night came on us, and as the navigation of the Elbe is perilous, we dropped anchor.

Over what place, thought I, does the moon hang to *your* eye, my dearest friend? To me it hung over the left bank of the Elbe. Close above the moon was a huge volume of deep black cloud, while a very thin fillet crossed the middle of the orb, as narrow, and thin, and black as a ribbon of crape. The long trembling road of moonlight, which lay on the water, and reached to the stern of our vessel, glimmered dimly and obscurely. We saw two or three lights from the right bank, probably from bed rooms. I felt the striking contrast between the silence of this majestic stream, whose banks are populous with men and women and children, and flocks and herds—between the silence by night of this peopled river, and the ceaseless noise and uproar, and loud agitations of the desolate solitude of the ocean. The passengers below had all retired to

their beds; and I felt the interest of this quiet scene the more deeply, from the circumstance of having just quitted them. For the Prussian had during the whole of the evening, displayed all his talents to captivate the Dane, who had admitted him into the train of his dependents. The young Englishman continued to interpret the Prussians jokes to me. They were all, without exception, profane and abominable, but some sufficiently witty, and a few incidents, which he related in his own person, were valuable as illustrating the manners of the countries in which they had taken place.

Five o'clock on Wednesday morning we hauled the anchor, but were soon obliged to drop it again in consequence of a thick fog, which our captain feared would continue the whole day; but about nine it cleared off, and we sailed slowly along, close by the shore of a very beautiful island, forty miles from Cuxhaven, the wind continuing slack. This holme or island is about a mile and a half in length, wedge-shaped, well wooded, with glades of the liveliest green, and rendered more interesting by the remarkably neat farm house on it. It seemed made for retirement without solitude—a place that would allure one's friends while it precluded the impertinent calls of mere visiters. The shores of the Elbe now became more beautiful, with rich meadows and trees running like a low wall along the river's edge; and peering over them, neat houses and (especially on the right bank) a profusion of steeple-spires, white, black or red. An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeples, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with a silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. I remember once, and once only, to have seen a spire in a narrow valley of a mountainous country. The effect was not only mean but ludicrous, and reminded me, against my will, of an *extinguisher*; the close neighborhood of the high mountain at the foot of which it stood, had so completely dwarfed it, and deprived it of all connection with the sky or clouds. Forty-six English miles from Cuxhaven, and sixteen from Hamburg, the Danish village Veder, ornaments the left bank with its black steeple, and close by it the wild and pastoral hamlet of Schulau. Hitherto, both the right and left bank, green to the very brink, and level with the river resembled the shores of a park canal. The trees and

houses were alike low; sometimes the low trees overtopping the yet lower houses; sometimes the low houses rising above the yet lower trees. But at Schulau, the left bank rises at once forty or fifty feet, and stares on the river with its perpendicular fassade of sand, thinly patched with tufts of green. The Elbe continued to present a more and more lively spectacle from the multitude of fishing boats and the flocks of sea gulls wheeling round them, the clamorous rivals and companions of the fishermen; till we came to Blankaness, a most interesting village scattered amid scattered trees, over three hills in three divisions. Each of the three hills stares upon the river, with faces of bare sand with which the boats, with their bare poles, standing in files along the banks, made a sort of fantastic harmony. Between each fassade lies a green and woody dell, each deeper than the other. In short, it is a large village made up of individual cottages, each cottage in the centre of its own little wood or orchard, and each with its own separate path: a village with a labyrinth of paths, or rather a *neighborhood* of houses! It is inhabited by fishermen and boat makers, the Blankanese boats being in great request through the whole navigation of the Elbe. Here first we saw the spires of Hamburg, and from hence as far as Altona, the left bank of the Elbe is uncommonly pleasing, considered as the vicinity of an industrious and republican city; in that style of beauty, or rather prettiness, that might tempt the citizen into the country, and yet gratify the taste which he had acquired in the town. Summer houses and Chinese show-work are every where scattered along the high and green banks; the boards of the farm houses left unplaistered and gaily painted with green and yellow; and scarcely a tree not cut into shapes, and made to remind the human being of his own power and intelligence instead of the wisdom of nature. Still, however, these are links of connection between town and country, and far better than the affectation of tastes and enjoyments for which men's habits have disqualified them. Pass them by on Saturdays and Sundays with the burgers of Hamburg smoking their pipes, the women and children feasting in the alcoves of box and yew, and it becomes a nature of its own. On Wednesday, four o'clock, we left the vessel, and passing with trouble through the huge masses of shipping that seemed to choke the wide Elbe from Altona upward, we were at length landed at the Boom House, Hamburg.

LETTER II. (TO A LADY.)

RATZEBURG.

Meine liebe Freundin,

See how natural the German comes from me, though I have not yet been six weeks in the country!—almost as fluently as English from my neighbour the Amptschreiber, (or public secretary,) who, as often as we meet, though it should be half a dozen times in the same day, never fails to greet me with—"* * *ddam your ploot unt eyes, my dearest Englander! vhee goes it?*"—which is certainly a proof of great generosity on his part, these words being his whole stock of English. I had, however, a better reason than the desire of displaying my proficiency; for I wished to put you in good humour with a language, from the acquirement of which I have promised myself much edification, and the means, too, of communicating a new pleasure to you and your sister, during our winter readings. And how can I do this better than by pointing out its gallant attention to the ladies? Our English affix, *ess*, is, I believe, confined either to words derived from the Latin, as *actress*, *directress*, &c. or from the French, as *mistress*, *duchess*, and the like. But the German, *in*, enables us to designate the sex in every possible relation of life. Thus the Amptman's lady is the Frau Amptman*in*—the secretary's wife (by-the-by the handsomest woman I have yet seen in Germany) is Die allerliebste Frau Amptschreiber*in*—the colonel's lady, Die Frau Obristin or colonel*in*—and even the pastor's wife, Die Frau pastor*in*. But I am especially pleased with their *freundin*, which, unlike the *amica* of the Romans, is seldom used but in its best and purest sense. Now, I know it will be said, that a friend is already something more than a friend, when a man feels an anxiety to express to himself that this friend is a female; but this I deny—in that sense, at least, in which the objection will be made. I would hazard the impeachment of heresy, rather than abandon my belief that there is a sex in our SOULS as well as in their perishable garments; and he who does not feel it, never truly loved a sister—nay, is not capable even of loving a wife as she deserves to be loved, if she indeed be worthy of that holy name.

Now, I know, my gentle friend, what you are murmuring to yourself—"This is so like him! running away after the first bubble that chance has blown off from the surface of his fancy, when one is anxious to learn where he is, and what he has seen." Well, then! that I am settled at Ratzeburg, with my motives and the particulars of my journey hither, ——— will inform you. My first letter to him, with which, doubtless, he has edified your whole fireside, left me safely landed at Hamburg, on the Elbe Stairs, at the Boom House. While standing on the stairs, I was amused by the contents of the passage boat which crosses the river once or twice a day from Hamburg to Haarburg. It was stowed close with all people of all nations, in all sorts of dresses; the men all with pipes in their mouths, and these pipes of all shapes and fancies—straight and wreathed, simple and complex, long and short, cane, clay, porcelain, wood, tin, silver, and ivory; most of them with silver chains and silver bole-covers. Pipes and boots are the first universal characteristic of the male Hamburgers that would strike the eye of a raw traveller. But I forget my promise of journalizing as much as possible. Therefore—*September 19th, afternoon.*—My companion, who, you recollect, speaks the French language with unusual propriety, had formed a kind of confidential acquaintance with the emigrant, who appeared to be a man of sense, and whose manners were those of a perfect gentleman. He seemed about fifty, or rather more. Whatever is unpleasant in French manners from excess in the *degree*, had been softened down by age or affliction; and all that is delightful in the *kind*, alacrity and delicacy in little attentions, &c. remained, and without bustle, gesticulation, or disproportionate eagerness. His demeanor exhibited the minute philanthrophy of a polished Frenchman, tempered by the sobriety of the English character, disunited from its reserve. There is something strangely attractive in the character of a *gentleman* when you apply the word emphatically, and yet in that sense of the term which it is more easy to *feel* than to define. It neither includes the possession of high moral excellence, nor of necessity even the ornamental graces of manner. I have now in my mind's eye, a person whose life would scarcely stand scrutiny, even in the court of honour, much less in that of conscience; and his manners, if nicely observed, would, of the two, excite an idea of awkwardness rather than of elegance; and yet, every one who conversed

with him felt and acknowledged *the gentleman*. The secret of the matter, I believe to be this—we feel the gentlemanly character present to us whenever, under all the circumstances of social intercourse, the trivial not less than the important, through the whole *detail* of his manners and deportment, and with the ease of a habit, a person shows respect to others in *such a way*, as at the same time implies, in his own feelings, an habitual and assured anticipation of reciprocal respect from them to himself. In short, the *gentlemanly* character arises out of the feeling of equality, acting as a habit, yet flexible to the varieties of rank, and modified without being disturbed or superseded by them. This description will, perhaps, explain to you the ground of one of your own remarks, as I was Englishing to you the interesting dialogue concerning the causes of the corruption of eloquence. "What perfect gentlemen these old Romans must have been! I was impressed, I remember, with the same feeling at the time I was reading a translation of Cicero's philosophical dialogues, and of his epistolary correspondence: while in Pliny's Letters I seemed to have a different feeling—he gave me the notion of a very *fine* gentleman." You uttered the words as if you had felt that the adjunct had injured the substance, and the increased degree altered the kind. Pliny was the courtier of an absolute monarch—Cicero, an aristocratic republican. For this reason the character of gentleman, in the sense to which I have confined it, is frequent in England, rare in France, and found, where it is found, in age, or at the latest period of manhood; while in Germany the character is almost unknown. But the proper *antipode* of a gentleman is to be sought for among the Anglo-American democrats.

I owe this digression, as an act of justice, to this amiable Frenchman, and of humiliation for myself. For in a little controversy between us on the subject of French poetry, he made me feel my own ill behaviour by the silent reproof of contrast; and when I afterwards apologized to him for the warmth of my language, he answered me with a cheerful expression of surprise, and an immediate compliment, which a gentleman might both make with dignity, and receive with pleasure. I was pleased, therefore, to find it agreed on, that we should, if possible, take up our quarters in the same house. My friend went with him in search of an hotel, and I to deliver my letters of recommendation.

I walked onward at a brisk pace, enlivened not so much by any thing I actually saw, as by the confused sense that I was for the first time in my life on the *continent* of our planet. I seemed to myself like a liberated bird that had been hatched in an aviary, who now after his first soar of freedom poises himself in the upper air. Very naturally I began to wonder at *all* things, some for being so like and some for being so unlike the things in England—Dutch women with large umbrella hats shooting out half a yard before them, with a prodigal plumpness of petticoat behind—the women of Hamburg with caps plated on the caul with silver or gold, or both, bordered round with stiffened lace, which *stood out* before their eyes, but not lower, so that the eyes sparkled through it—the Hanoverian women with the fore part of the head bare, then a stiff lace standing up like a wall perpendicular on the cap, and the cap behind *tailed* with an enormous quantity of ribbon, which lies or tosses on the back:

> "Their visnomies seem'd like a goodly banner,
> Spread in defiance of all enemies." SPENSER.

——The ladies all in English dresses, all *rouged*, and all with bad teeth: which you notice instantly from their contrast to the almost *animal, too* glossy mother-of-pearl whiteness, and the regularity of the teeth of the laughing, loud-talking country women and servant girls, who with their clean white stockings, and with slippers without heel-quarters, tripped along the dirty streets as if they were secured by a charm from the dirt; with a lightness, too, which surprised me, who had always considered it as one of the annoyances of sleeping *in an Inn*, that I had to clatter up stairs in a pair of them. The streets narrow; to my English nose sufficiently offensive, and explaining at first sight the universal use of boots; without any appropriate path for the foot-passengers; the gable ends of the houses all towards the street, some in the ordinary triangular form, and *entire*, as the botanists say, but the greater number notched and scolloped with more than Chinese grotesqueness. Above all, I was struck with the profusion of windows, so large and so many that the houses look all glass. Mr. Pitt's window tax, with its pretty little *additionals* sprouting out from it, like young toadlets on the back of a Surinam toad, would certainly improve the appearance of the Hamburg houses, which have a slight summer

look, not *in keeping* with their size, incongruous with the climate, and precluding that feeling of retirement and self-content, which one wishes to associate with a house in a noisy city. But a conflagration would, I fear, be the previous requisite to the production of any architectural beauty in Hamburg: for verily it is a filthy town. I moved on and crossed a multitude of ugly bridges, with huge black deformities of water wheels close by them. The water intersects the city every where, and would have furnished to the genius of Italy the capabilities of all that is most beautiful and magnificent in architecture. It might have been the rival of Venice, and it is huddle and ugliness, stench and stagnation. The Jungfer Stieg, (i. e. young ladies' walk,) to which my letters directed me, made an exception. It is a walk or promenade planted with treble rows of elm trees, which being yearly pruned and cropped, remain slim and dwarf-like. This walk occupies one side of a square piece of water, with many swans on it perfectly tame; and, moving among the swans, showy pleasure boats with ladies in them, rowed by their husbands or lovers. * * * * * *

(*Some paragraphs have been here omitted.*)

thus embarrassed by sad and solemn politeness, still more than by broken English, it sounded like the voice of an old friend when I heard the emigrant's servant inquiring after me. He had come for the purpose of guiding me to our hotel. Through streets and streets I pressed on as happy as a child, and, I doubt not, with a childish expression of wonderment in my busy eyes, amused by the wicker wagons with moveable benches across them, one behind the other; (these were the hackney coaches;) amused by the sign-boards of the shops, on which all the articles sold within are painted, and that, too, very exactly, though in a grotesque confusion; (a useful substitute for language in this great mart of nations;) amused with the incessant tinkling of the shop and house door bells, the bell hanging over each door, and struck with a small iron rod at every entrance and exit; and finally, amused by looking in at the windows as I passed along: the ladies and gentlemen drinking coffee or playing cards, and the gentlemen all smoking. I wished myself a painter, that I might have sent you a sketch of one of the card parties. The long pipe of one gentleman rested on the table, its bole half a yard from his mouth, fuming like a censer by the fish pool; the other gentleman, who was dealing the cards, and

of course had both hands employed, held his pipe in his teeth, which, hanging down between his knees, smoked beside his ancles. Hogarth himself never drew a more ludicrous distortion both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effort occasioned; nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humourous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius!) neither acts, nor is *meant* to act, as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter; and thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature, or the foibles or humours of our fellow men, from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred.

Our hotel DIE WILDE MAN, (the sign of which was no bad likeness of the landlord, who had engrafted on a very grim face a restless grin, that was at every man's service, and which indeed, like an actor rehearsing to himself, he kept playing in *expectation* of an occasion for it,) neither our hotel, I say, nor its landlord, were of the genteelest class. But it has one great advantage for a stranger, by being in the market place, and the next neighbour of the huge church of St. Nicholas; a church with shops and houses built up against it, out of which *wens* and *warts* its high massy steeple rises, *necklaced* near the top with a round of large gilt balls. A better pole-star could scarcely be desired. Long shall I retain the impression made on my mind by the awful echo, so loud and long and tremulous, of the deep-toned clock within this church, which awoke me at two in the morning from a distressful dream, occasioned, I believe, by the feather bed, which is used here instead of bed clothes. I will rather carry my blanket about with me like a wild Indian, than submit to this abominable custom. Our emigrant acquaintance was, we found, an intimate friend of the celebrated Abbe de Lisle; and from the large fortune which he possessed under the monarchy, had rescued sufficient not only for independence, but for respectability. He had offended some of his fellow emigrants in London, whom he had obliged with considerable sums, by a refusal to make further advances, and in consequence of their

intrigues, had received an order to quit the kingdom. I thought it one proof of his innocence, that he attached no blame either to the alien act, or to the minister who had exerted it against him; and a still greater, that he spoke of London with rapture, and of his favourite niece, who had married and settled in England, with all the fervour and all the pride of a fond parent. A man sent by force out of a country, obliged to sell out of the stocks at a great loss, and exiled from those pleasures and that style of society which habit had rendered essential to his happiness, whose predominant feelings were yet all of a private nature, resentment for friendship outraged, and anguish for domestic affections interrupted—such a man, I think, I could dare warrant guiltless of *espoinage* in any service, most of all in that of the present French Directory. He spoke with extacy of Paris under the monarchy: and yet the particular facts, which made up his description, left as deep a conviction on my mind, of French worthlessness, as his own tale had done of emigrant ingratitude. Since my arrival in Germany, I have not met a single person, even among those who abhor the revolution, that spoke with favour, or even charity, of the French emigrants. Though the belief of their influence in the origination of this disastrous war, (from the horrors of which North Germany deems itself only reprieved, not secured,) may have some share in the general aversion with which they are regarded; yet I am deeply persuaded that the far greater part is owing to their own profligacy, to their treachery and hard-heartedness to each other, and the domestic misery or corrupt principles which so many of them have carried into the families of their protectors. My heart dilated with honest pride, as I recalled to mind the stern yet amiable characters of the English patriots, who sought refuge on the Continent at the restoration! O let not our civil war under the first Charles, be paralleled with the French revolution! In the former, the chalice overflowed from excess of principle; in the latter, from the fermentation of the dregs! The former was a civil war between the virtues and virtuous prejudices of the two parties; the latter, between the vices. The Venetian glass of the French monarchy shivered and flew asunder with the working of a double poison.

Sept. 20*th*. I was introduced to Mr. Klopstock, the brother of the poet, who again introduced me to professor Ebeling, an intelligent and lively man, though deaf: so deaf, indeed, that it was a

painful effort to talk with him, as we were obliged to drop all our pearls into a huge ear-trumpet. From this courteous and kind-hearted man of letters, (I hope the German literati in general may resemble this first specimen,) I heard a tolerable Italian pun, and an interesting anecdote. When Bonaparte was in Italy, having been irritated by some instance of perfidy, he said in a loud and vehement tone, in a public company—"'Tis a true proverb, *gli Italiani tutti ladroni*;"—(i. e. *the Italians all plunderers.*) A lady had the courage to reply—"Non tutti, ma BUONA PARTE;"—(*not all, but a good part*, or *Buonaparte.*) This, I confess, sounded to *my* ears as one of the many good things that *might have been* said. The anecdote is more valuable, for it instances the ways and means of French insinuation. HOCHE had received much information concerning the face of the country, from a map of unusual fulness and accuracy, the maker of which, he heard, resided at Dusseldorf. At the storming of Dusseldorf by the French army, Hoche previously ordered that the house and property of this man should be preserved, and entrusted the performance of the order to an officer on whose troop he could rely. Finding afterwards that the man had escaped before the storming commenced, Hoche exclaimed, "HE had no reason to flee! it is *for* such men, and not *against* them, that the French nation makes war, and consents to shed the blood of its children." You remember Milton's sonnet—

> "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
> Went to the ground"———————

Now, though the Dusseldorf map-maker may stand in the same relation to the Theban bard, as the snail that marks its path by lines of film on the wall it creeps over, to the eagle that soars sunward, and beats the tempest with its wings; it does not therefore follow, that the Jacobin of France may not be as valiant a general and as good a politician as the madman of Macedon.

From Professor Ebeling's, Mr. Klopstock accompanied my friend and me to his own house, where I saw a fine bust of his brother. There was a solemn and heavy greatness in his countenance, which corresponded to my preconceptions of his style and genius. I saw there, likewise, a very fine portrait of Lessing, whose works are at present the chief object of my admiration. His eyes were uncommonly like mine; if any thing, rather larger and

more prominent. But the lower part of his face and his nose—O what an exquisite expression of elegance and sensibility!—There appeared no depth, weight, or comprehensiveness, in the forehead. The whole face seemed to say, that Lessing was a man of quick and voluptuous feelings; of an active, but light fancy; acute; yet acute not in the observation of actual life, but in the arrangements and management of the ideal world, i. e. in taste and in metaphysics. I assure you, that I wrote these very words in my memorandum book, with the portrait before my eyes, and when I knew nothing of Lessing but his name, and that he was a German writer of eminence.

We consumed two hours and more over a bad dinner, at the table d'Hote. "PATIENCE *at a German ordinary, smiling at time.*" The Germans are the worst cooks in Europe. There is placed for every two persons a bottle of common wine, Rhenish and Claret alternately; but in the houses of the opulent, during the many and long intervals of the dinner, the servants hand round glasses of richer wines. At the Lord of Culpin's they came in this order: Burgundy—Madeira—Port—Frontiniac—Pacchiaretti—Old Hock—Mountain—Champagne—Hock again—Bishop, and lastly, Punch. A tolerable quantum, methinks! The last dish at the ordinary, viz. slices of roast pork, (for all the larger dishes are brought in, cut up, and first handed round, and then set on the table,) with stewed prunes and other sweet fruits, and this followed by cheese and butter, with plates of apples, reminded me of Shakspeare;* and Shakspeare put it in my head to go to the French comedy.

* * * * * *

Bless me! Why it is worse than our modern English plays! The first act informed me, that a court martial is to be held on a Count Vatron, who had drawn his sword on the Colonel, his brother-in-law. The officers plead in his behalf—in vain! His wife, the Colonel's sister, pleads with most tempestuous agonies—in vain! She falls into hysterics and faints away, to the dropping of the inner curtain! In the second act sentence of death is passed on the Count—his wife as frantic and hysterical as before; more so (good industrious creature!) she could not be. The third and last act,

* "*Slender.* I bruised my shin with playing with sword and dagger for a dish of stewed prunes, and by my troth I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since." So again: *Evans.* "I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese yet to come."

the wife still frantic, very frantic indeed! the soldiers just about to fire, the handkerchief actually dropped, when reprieve! reprieve! is heard from behin dthe scenes: and in comes Prince somebody, pardons the Count, and the wife is still frantic, only with joy; that was all!

O dear lady! this is one of the cases in which laughter is followed by melancholy: for such is the *kind* of drama which is now substituted every where for Shakspeare and Racine. You well know that I offer violence to my own feelings in joining these names. But, however meanly I may think of the French serious drama, even in its most perfect specimens; and with whatever right I may complain of its perpetual falsification of the language, and of the connections and transitions of thought, which Nature has appropriated to states of passion; still, however, the French tragedies are consistent works of art, and the offspring of great intellectual power. Preserving a fitness in the parts, and a harmony in the whole, they form a nature of their own, though a false nature. Still they excite the minds of the spectators to active thought, to a striving after ideal excellence. The soul is not stupified into mere sensations by a worthless sympathy with our own ordinary sufferings, or an empty curiosity for the surprising, undignified by the language or the situations which awe and delight the imagination. What, (I would ask of the crowd, that press forward to the pantomimic tragedies and weeping comedies of Kotzebue and his imitators,) what are you seeking? Is it comedy? But in the comedy of Shakspeare and Moliere, the more accurate my knowledge, and the more profoundly I think, the greater is the satisfaction that mingles with my laughter. For though the qualities which these writers pourtray are ludicrous indeed, either from the kind or the excess, and exquisitely ludicrous, yet are they the natural growth of the human mind, and such as, with more or less change in the drapery, I can apply to my own heart, or, at least, to whole classes of my fellow creatures. How often are not the moralist and the metaphysician obliged for the happiest illustrations of general truths, and the subordinate laws of human thought and action, to quotations not only from the tragic characters, but equally from the Jacques, Falstaff, and even from the fools and clowns of Shakspeare, or from the Miser, Hypochondriast, and Hypocrite, of Moliere! Say not, that I am recommending abstractions: for these class-

characteristics, which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shaksperian Drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence, and (if I may mention his name without pedantry to a lady) Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth itself, which is uppermost in the consciousness; in poetry, the individual form in which the truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of *poetry*. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely, much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, slang phrases for the day, or the clothing of common-place morals in metaphors, drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters; nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them fac-similies of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to affect us indeed, but within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are," and of the peculiar state in which each man *happens* to be; suspending our individual recollections, and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

Hold! (methinks I hear the spokesman of the crowd reply, and we will listen to him. I am the plaintiff, and be he the defendant.)

DEFENDANT. Hold! are not our modern sentimental plays filled with the best Christian morality?

PLAINTIFF. Yes! just as much of it, and just that part of it which you can exercise without a single christian virtue—without a single sacrifice that is really painful to you!—just as much as *flatters* you, sends you away pleased with your own hearts, and quite reconciled to your vices, which can never be thought very ill of, when they keep such good company, and walk hand in hand

with so much compassion and generosity; adulation so loathsome, that you would spit in the man's face who dared offer it to you in a private company, unless you interpreted it as insulting irony, you appropriate with infinite satisfaction, when you share the garbage with the whole stye, and gobble it out of a common trough. No Cæsar must pace your boards—no Antony, no royal Dane, no Orestes, no Andromache!—

D. No: or as few of them as possible. What has a plain citizen of London or Hamburg to do with your kings and queens, and your old school-boy Pagan heroes? Besides, every body knows the *stories*; and what curiosity can we feel———

P. What, Sir, not for the *manner?* not for the delightful language of the poet? not for the situations, the action and re-action of the passions?

D. You are hasty, Sir! the only curiosity we feel is in the story; and how can we be anxious concerning the end of a play, or be surprized by it, when we know how it will turn out?

P. Your pardon for having interrupted you! we now understand each other. You seek, then, in a tragedy, which wise men of old held for the highest effort of human genius, the same gratification as that you receive from a new novel, the last German romance, and other dainties of the day, which *can* be enjoyed but once. If you carry these feelings to the sister art of Painting, Michael Angelo's Sestine Chapel, and the Scripture Gallery of Raphael, can expect no favour from you. *You know all about them beforehand;* and are, doubtless, more familiar with the subjects of those paintings than with the tragic tales of the historic or heroic ages. There is a consistency, therefore, in your preference of contemporary writers: for the great men of former times, those at least who were deemed great by our ancestors, sought so little to gratify *this* kind of curiosity, that they seemed to have regarded the *story* in a not much higher light than the painter regards his canvass; as that *on*, not *by* which they were to display their appropriate excellence. No work, resembling a tale or romance, can well show less variety of invention in the incidents, or less anxiety in weaving them together, than the Don Quixote of Cervantes. Its admirers feel the disposition to go back and re-peruse some preceding chapter, at least ten times for once that they find any eagerness to hurry forwards: or open the book on those parts

which they best recollect, even as we visit those friends oftenest whom we love most, and with whose characters and actions we are the most intimately acquainted. In the divine ARIOSTO, (as his countrymen call this, their darling poet,) I question whether there be a single *tale* of his own invention, or the elements of which, were not familiar to the readers of "old romance." I will pass by the ancient Greeks, who thought it even necessary to the fable of a tragedy, that its substance should be previously known. That there had been at least fifty tragedies with the same title, would be one of the motives which determined Sophocles and Euripides, in the choice of Electra as a subject. But Milton—

D. Aye, Milton, indeed! but do not Dr. Johnson, and other great men tell us, that nobody now reads Milton but as a task?

P. So much the worse for them, of whom this can be truly said! But why then do you pretend to admire *Shakspeare?* The greater part, if not all, of *his* dramas were, as far as the names and the main incidents are concerned, already stock plays. All the *stories*, at least, on which they are built, pre-existed in the chronicles, ballads, or translations of contemporary or preceding English writers. Why, I repeat, do you pretend to admire *Shakspeare?* Is it, perhaps, that you only *pretend* to admire him? However, as once for all you have dismissed the well known events and personages of history, or the epic muse, what have you taken in their stead? Whom has *your* tragic muse armed with her bowl and dagger? the sentimental muse, I should have said, whom you have seated in the throne of tragedy? What heroes has *she* reared on her buskins?

D. O! our good friends and next door neighbours—honest tradesmen, valiant tars, high-spirited half pay officers, philanthropic Jews, virtuous courtezans, tender-hearted braziers, and sentimental rat catchers! (a little bluff or so, but all our very generous, tender-hearted characters *are* a little rude or misanthropic, and all our misanthropes very tender-hearted.)

P. But I pray you, friend, in what actions, great or interesting, can such men be engaged?

D. They give away a great deal of money; find rich dowries for young men and maidens, who have all other good qualities; they browbeat lords, baronets, and justices of the peace, (for they are as bold as Hector!) they rescue stage coaches at the instant

they are falling down precipices; carry away infants in the sight of opposing armies; and some of our performers act a muscular able-bodied man to such perfection, that our dramatic poets, who always have the actors in their eye, seldom fail to make their favourite male character as strong as Samson. And then they take such prodigious leaps! And what is *done* on the stage, is more striking even than what is acted. I once remember such a deafening explosion, that I could not hear a word of the play for half an act after it; and a little real gunpowder being set fire to at the same time, and smelt by all the spectators, the naturalness of the scene was quite astonishing!

P. But how can you connect with such men and such actions that dependence of thousands on the fate of one, which gives so lofty an interest to the personages of Shakspeare, and the Greek tragedians? How can you connect with them that sublimest of all feelings, the power of destiny and the controlling might of heaven, which seems to elevate the characters which sink beneath its irresistible blow?

D. O, mere fancies! We seek and find on the present stage, our own wants and passions, our own vexations, losses, and embarrassments.

P. It is your poor own pettyfogging nature, then, which you desire to have represented before you, not human nature in its height and vigour? But surely you might find the former, with all its joys and sorrows, more conveniently in your own houses and parishes.

D. True! but here comes a difference. Fortune is blind, but the poet has his eyes open, and is besides as complaisant as fortune is capricious. He makes every thing turn out exactly as we would wish it. He gratifies us by representing those as hateful or contemptible whom we hate and wish to despise.

P. (*aside*) That is, he gratifies your envy by libelling your superiors.

D. He makes all those precise moralists, who affect to be better than their neighbours, turn out at last abject hypocrites, traitors, and hard-hearted villains; and your men of spirit, who take their girl and their glass with equal freedom, prove the true men of honour, and (that no part of the audience may remain unsatisfied) reform in the last scene, and leave no doubt on the minds of the la-

dies, that they will make most faithful and excellent husbands; though it does seem a pity, that they should be obliged to get rid of qualities which had made them so interesting! Besides, the poor become rich all at once; and, in the final matrimonial choice, the opulent and high-born themselves are made to confess, that VIRTUE IS THE ONLY TRUE NOBILITY, AND THAT A LOVELY WOMAN IS A DOWRY OF HERSELF!

P. Excellent! But you have forgotten those brilliant flashes of loyalty, those patriotic praises of the king and old England, which, especially if conveyed in a metaphor from the ship or the shop, so often solicit, and so unfailingly receive the public plaudit! I give your prudence credit for the omission. For the whole system of your drama is a moral and intellectual *Jacobinism* of the most dangerous kind, and those common-place rants of loyalty are no better than hypocracy in your play-rights, and your own sympathy with them a gross self-delusion. For the whole secret of dramatic popularity consists, with you, in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things, their causes and their effects; in the excitement of surprise, by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour (those things, rather, which pass among you for such) in persons and in classes of life where experience teaches us least to expect them; and in rewarding with all the sympathies that are the dues of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion, have excommunicated from our esteem!

And now, good night! Truly! I might have written this last sheet without having gone to Germany, but I fancied myself talking to you by your own fireside, and can you think it a small pleasure to me to forget, now and then, that I am *not* there? Besides, you and my other good friends have made up your minds to me as I am, and from whatever place I write, you will expect that part of my "Travels" will consist of the excursions in my own mind.

LETTER III.

RATZEBURG.

No little fish thrown back again into the water, no fly unimprisoned from a child's hand, could more buoyantly enjoy its element, than I this clean and peaceful house, with this lovely view of the town, groves, and lake of Ratzeburg, from the window at which I am writing. My spirits, certainly, and my health I fancied, were beginning to sink under the noise, dirt, and unwholesome air of our Hamburg hotel. I left it on Sunday, Sept. 23d, with a letter of introduction from the poet Klopstock, to the Amptman of Ratzeburg. The Amptman received me with kindness, and introduced me to the worthy pastor, who agreed to board and lodge me for any length of time not less than a month. The vehicle, in which I took my place, was considerably larger than an English stage coach, to which it bore much the same proportion and rude resemblance, that an elephant's ear does to the human. Its top was composed of naked boards of different colours, and seeming to have been parts of different wainscots. Instead of windows, there were leathern curtains with a little eye of glass in each; they perfectly answered the purpose of keeping out the prospect, and letting in the cold. I could observe little, therefore, but the inns and farm houses at which we stopped. They were all alike, except in size: one great room, like a barn, with a hay-loft over it, the straw and hay dangling in tufts through the boards which formed the ceiling of the room, and the floor of the loft. From this room, which is paved like a street, sometimes one, sometimes two smaller ones, are enclosed at one end. These are commonly floored. In the large room, the cattle, pigs, poultry, men, women and children, live in amicable community; yet there was an appearance of cleanliness and rustic comfort. One of these houses I measured. It was an hundred feet in length. The apartments were taken off from one corner; between these and the stalls there was a small interspace, and here the breadth was forty-eight feet, but thirty-two where the stalls were; of course, the stalls were on each side eight feet in depth. The faces of the cows, &c. were turned towards

the room; indeed, they were in it, so that they had at least the comfort of seeing each other's faces. Stall feeding is universal in this part of Germany, a practice concerning which the agriculturist and the poet are likely to entertain opposite opinions, or at least to have very different feelings. The wood work of these buildings on the outside is left unplaistered, as in old houses among us, and being painted red and green, it cuts and tasselates the buildings very gayly. From within three miles of Hamburg almost to Molln, which is thirty miles from it, the country, as far as I could see it, was a dead flat, only varied by woods. At Molln it became more beautiful. I observed a small lake nearly surrounded with groves, and a palace in view, belonging to the king of Great Britain, and inhabited by the Inspector of the Forests. We were nearly the same time in travelling the thirty-five miles from Hamburg to Ratzeburg, as we had been in going from London to Yarmouth, one hundred and twenty-six miles.

The lake of Ratzeburg runs from south to north, about nine miles in length, and varying in breadth from three miles to half a mile. About a mile from the southernmost point it is divided into two, of course very unequal parts, by an island, which being connected by a bridge and a narrow slip of land with the one shore, and by another bridge of immense length with the other shore, forms a complete isthmus. On this island the town of Ratzeburg is built. The pastor's house or vicarage, together with the Amptman's, Amptschreiber's, and the church, stands near the summit of a hill, which slopes down to the slip of land and the little bridge, from which, through a superb military gate, you step into the island-town of Ratzeburg. This again is itself a little hill, by ascending and descending which you arrive at the long bridge, and so to the other shore. The water to the south of the town is called the Little Lake, which, however, almost engrosses the beauties of the whole: the shores being just often enough green and bare to give the proper effect to the magnificent groves which occupy the greater part of their circumference. From the turnings, windings, and indentations of the shore, the views vary almost every ten steps, and the whole has a sort of majestic beauty, a feminine grandeur. At the north of the Great Lake, and peeping over it, I see the seven church towers of Lubec, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, yet as distinctly as if they were not three. The only defect

in the view is, that Ratzeburg is built entirely of red bricks, and all the houses roofed with red tiles. To the eye, therefore, it presents a clump of brick-dust red. Yet this evening, Oct. 10th, twenty minutes past five, I saw the town perfectly beautiful, and the whole softened down into *complete keeping*, if I may borrow a term from the painters. The sky over Ratzeburg and all the east, was a pure evening blue, while over the west it was covered with light sandy clouds. Hence, a deep red light spread over the whole prospect, in undisturbed harmony with the red town, the brown-red woods, and the yellow-red reeds on the skirts of the lake. Two or three boats, with single persons paddling them, floated up and down in the rich light, which not only was itself in harmony with all, but brought all into harmony.

I should have told you that I went back to Hamburg on Thursday, (Sept. 27th,) to take leave of my friend, who travels southward, and returned hither on the Monday following. From Empfelde, a village half way from Ratzeburg, I walked to Hamburg through deep sandy roads, and a dreary flat: the soil every where white, hungry, and excessively pulverized; but the approach to the city is pleasing. Light cool country houses, which you can look through and see the gardens behind them, with arbours and trellis work, and thick vegetable walls, and trees in cloisters and piazzas, each house with neat rails before it, and green seats within the rails. Every object, whether the growth of nature or the work of man, was neat and artificial. It pleased me far better than if the houses and gardens and pleasure fields had been in a nobler taste; for this nobler taste would have been mere apery. The busy, anxious, money-loving merchant of Hamburg could only have *adopted*, he could not have *enjoyed* the simplicity of nature. The mind begins to love nature by imitating human conveniencies in nature; but this is a step in intellect, though a low one—and were it not so, yet all around me spoke of innocent enjoyment and sensitive comforts, and I entered with unscrupulous sympathy into the enjoyments and comforts even of the busy, anxious, money-loving merchants of Hamburg. In this charitable and *catholic* mood I reached the vast ramparts of the city. These are huge green cushions, one rising above the other, with trees growing in the interspaces, pledges and symbols of a long peace. Of my return I have nothing worth communicating, except that I took extra post, which answers to

posting in England. These north German post chaises are uncovered wicker carts. An English dust cart is a piece of finery, a chef d'œuvre of mechanism, compared with them; and the horses!—a savage might use their ribs instead of his fingers for a numeration table. Wherever we stopped, the postilion fed his cattle with the brown rye bread of which he eat himself, all breakfasting together, only the horses had no gin to their water, and the postilion no water to his gin. Now and henceforward for subjects of more interest to you, and to the objects in search of which I left you: namely, the literati and literature of Germany.

Believe me, I walked with an impression of awe on my spirits, as W—— and myself accompanied Mr. Klopstock to the house of his brother, the poet, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the city gate. It is one of a row of little common-place summer houses, (for so they looked,) with four or five rows of young meagre elm trees before the windows, beyond which is a green, and then a dead flat, intersected with several roads. Whatever beauty (thought I) may be before the poet's eyes at present, it must certainly be purely of his own creation. We waited a few minutes in a neat little parlour, ornamented with the figures of two of the muses, and with prints, the subjects of which were from Klopstock's odes. The poet entered; I was much disappointed in his countenance, and recognized in it no likeness to the bust. There was no comprehension in the forehead, no weight over the eye-brows, no expression of peculiarity, moral or intellectual, on the eyes, no massiveness in the general countenance. He is, if any thing, rather below the middle size. He wore very large half-boots, which his legs filled, so fearfully were they swoln. However, though neither W—— nor myself could discover any indications of sublimity or enthusiasm in his physiognomy, we were both equally impressed with his liveliness, and his kind and ready courtesy. He talked in French with my friend, and with difficulty spoke a few sentences to me in English. His enunciation was not in the least affected by the entire want of his upper teeth. The conversation began on his part by the expression of his rapture at the surrender of the detachment of French troops under General Humbert. Their proceedings in Ireland with regard to the committee which they had appointed, with the rest of their organizing system, seemed to have given the poet great entertainment. He then declared his

sanguine belief in Nelson's victory, and anticipated its confirmation with a keen and triumphant pleasure. His words, tones, looks, implied the most vehement Anti-Gallicanism. The subject changed to literature, and I inquired in Latin concerning the History of German Poetry, and the elder German Poets. To my great astonishment, he confessed that he knew very little on the subject. He had indeed occasionally read one or two of their elder writers, but not so as to enable him to speak of their merits. Professor Ebeling, he said, would probably give me every information of this kind: the subject had not particularly excited his curiosity. He then talked of Milton and Glover, and thought Glover's blank verse superior to Milton's. W—— and myself expressed our surprise; and my friend gave his definition and notion of harmonious verse, that it consisted (the English iambic blank verse above all) in the apt arrangement of pauses and cadences, and the sweep of whole paragraphs,

> ——————"with many a winding bout
> Of linked sweetness long drawn out,"

and not in the even flow, much less in the prominence or antithetic vigour of single lines, which were indeed injurious to the total effect, except where they were introduced for some specific purpose. Klopstock assented, and said that he meant to confine Glover's superiority to single lines. He told us that he had read Milton, in a prose translation, when he was fourteen.* I understood him thus myself, and W—— interpreted Klopstock's French as I had already construed it. He appeared to know very little of Milton, or indeed of our poets in general. He spoke with great indignation of the English prose translation of his Messiah. All the translations had been bad, very bad—but the English was *no* translation; there were pages on pages not in the original—and half the original was not to be found in the translation. W—— told him that I intended to translate a few of his odes as specimens of German lyrics; he then said to me in English, "I wish you would render into English some select passages of the Messiah, and *revenge* me of your countryman!" It was the liveliest thing

* This was accidentally confirmed to me by an old German gentleman at Helmstadt, who had been Klopstock's school and bed-fellow. Among other boyish anecdotes, he related that the young poet set a particular value on a translation of the Paradise Lost, and always slept with it under his pillow.

which he produced in the whole conversation. He told us that his first ode was fifty years older than his last. I looked at him with much emotion—I considered him as the venerable father of German poetry; as a good man; as a christian; seventy-four years old; with legs enormously swoln, yet active, lively, cheerful, and kind, and communicative. My eyes felt as if a tear were swelling into them. In the portrait of Lessing, there was a toupee perriwig, which enormously injured the effect of his physiognomy; Klopstock wore the same, powdered and frizzled. By-the-bye, old men ought never to wear powder—the contrast between a large snow-white wig and the colour of an old man's skin is disgusting, and wrinkles in such a neighbourhood appear only channels for dirt. It is an honour to poets and great men that you think of them as parts of nature; and any thing of trick and fashion wounds you in them as much as when you see venerable yews clipped into miserable peacocks. The author of the Messiah should have worn his own grey hair. His powder and perriwig were to the eye, what Mr. Virgil would be to the ear.

Klopstock dwelt much on the superior power which the German language possessed of concentrating meaning. He said he had often translated parts of Homer and Virgil, line by line, and a German line proved always sufficient for a Greek or Latin one. In English you cannot do this. I answered, that in English we could commonly render one Greek heroic line in a line and a half of our common heroic metre, and I conjectured that this line and a half would be found to contain no more syllables than one German or Greek hexameter. He did not understand me;* and I who wished to hear his opinions, not to correct them, was glad that he did not.

* Klopstock's observation was partly true and partly erroneous. In the literal sense of his words, and if we confine the comparison to the average of space required for the expression of the same thought in the two languages, it is erroneous. I have translated some German hexameters into English hexameters, and find, that on the average, three lines English will express four lines German. The reason is evident: our language abounds in monosyllables and dissyllables. The German, not less than the Greek, is a polysyllable language. But in another point of view the remark was not without foundation. For the German, possessing the same unlimited privilege of forming compounds, both with prepositions, and with epithets as the Greek, it can express the richest single Greek word in a single German one, and is thus freed from the necessity of weak or ungraceful paraphrases. I will content myself with one example at present, viz. the use of the prefixed particles, *ver*, *zer*, *ent*, and *weg:* thus, reissen to rend, verreissen to rend away, zerreissen to rend to pieces, *entreissen* to rend off or out of a thing, in the active sense: er schmelzen to melt—ver, zer, ent, schmelzen—and in like manner through all the verbs neuter and active. If you consider only how much we should feel the loss of the prefix *be*, as in bedropt, besprinkle, besot, especially in our poetical language, and then think that this same

We now took our leave. At the beginning of the French Revolution, Klopstock wrote odes of congratulation. He received some honorary presents from the French Republic, (a golden crown, I believe,) and, like our Priestly, was invited to a seat in the legislature, which he declined. But when French liberty metamorphosed herself into a fury, he sent back these presents with a palinodia, declaring his abhorrence of their proceedings; and since then he has been perhaps more than enough an Anti-Gallican. I mean, that in his just contempt and detestation of the crimes and follies of the Revolutionists, he suffers himself to forget that the revolution itself is a process of the Divine Providence; and that as the folly of men is the wisdom of God, so are their iniquities instruments of his goodness. From Klopstock's house we walked to the ramparts, discoursing together on the poet and his conversation, till our attention was diverted to the beauty and singularity of the sunset, and its effects on the objects round us. There were woods in the distance. A rich sandy light (nay, of a much deeper colour than sandy) lay over these woods that blackened in the blaze. Over that part of the woods which lay immediately under the intenser light, a brassy mist floated. The trees on the ramparts, and the people moving to and fro between them, were cut or divided into equal segments of deep shade and brassy light. Had the trees, and the bodies of the men and women, been divided into equal segments by a rule or pair of compasses, the portions could not have been more regular. All else was obscure. It was a fairy scene! and to increase its romantic character, among the moving objects thus divided into alternate shade and brightness, was a beautiful child, dressed with the elegant simplicity of an

mode of composition is carried through all their simple and compound prepositions, and many of their adverbs; and that with most of these the Germans have the same privilege as we have of dividing them from the verb and placing them at the end of the sentence; you will have no difficulty in comprehending the reality and the cause of this superior power in the German of condensing meaning, in which its great poet exulted. It is impossible to read half a dozen pages of Wieland without perceiving that in this respect the German has no rival but the Greek. And yet I seem to feel, that concentration or condensation is not the happiest mode of expressing this excellence, which seems to consist not so much in the less time required for conveying an impression, as in the unity and simultaneousness with which the impression is conveyed. It tends to make their language more picturesque: it *depictures* images better. We have obtained this power in part by our compound verbs derived from the Latin; and the sense of its great effect no doubt induced our Milton both to the use and the abuse of Latin derivatives. But still these prefixed particles, conveying no separate or separable meaning to the mere English reader, cannot possibly act on the mind with the force or liveliness of an original and homogeneous language such as the German is, and besides are confined to certain words.

English child, riding on a stately goat, the saddle, bridle, and other accoutrements of which were in a high degree costly and splendid. Before I quit the subject of Hamburg, let me say, that I remained a day or two longer than I otherwise should have done, in order to be present at the feast of St. Michael, the patron saint of Hamburg, expecting to see the civic pomp of this commercial Republic. I was, however, disappointed. There were no processions; two or three sermons were preached to two or three old women in two or three churches, and St. Michael and his patronage wished elsewhere by the higher classes, all places of entertainment, theatre, &c. being shut up on this day. In Hamburg, there seems to be no religion at all: in Lubec it is confined to the women. The men seem determined to be divorced from their wives in the other world, if they cannot in this. You will not easily conceive a more singular sight than is presented by the vast aisle of the principal church at Lubec, seen from the organ-loft; for being filled with female servants, and persons in the same class of life, and all their caps having gold and silver cauls, it appears like a rich pavement of gold and silver.

I will conclude this letter with the mere transcription of notes, which my friend W—— made of his conversations with Klopstock, during the interviews that took place after my departure. On these I shall make but one remark at present, and that will appear a presumptuous one, namely, that Klopstock's remarks on the venerable sage of Koenigsburg are, to my own knowledge, injurious and mistaken; and so far is it from being true that his system is now given up, that throughout the Universities of Germany there is not a single professor who is not either a Kantean, or a disciple of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantean, and pre-supposes its truth; or lastly, who, though an antagonist of Kant as to his theoretical work, has not embraced wholly or in part his moral system, and adopted part of his nomenclature. "Klopstock having wished to see the Calvary of Cumberland, and asked what was thought of it in England, I went to Remnant's, (the English bookseller,) where I procured the Analytical Review, in which is contained the review of Cumberland's Calvary. I remembered to have read there some specimens of a blank verse translation of the Messiah. I had mentioned this to Klopstock, and he had a great desire to see them. I walked over to his house and put the book into his hands. On

adverting to his own poem, he told me he began the Messiah when he was seventeen; he devoted three entire years to the plan, without composing a single line. He was greatly at a loss in what manner to execute his work. There were no successful specimens of versification in the German language before this time. The first three cantos he wrote in a species of measured or numerous prose. This, though done with much labour and some success, was far from satisfying him. He had composed hexameters both Latin and Greek as a school exercise, and there had been also in the German language attempts in that style of versification. These were only of very moderate merit. One day he was struck with the idea of what could be done in this way; he kept his room a whole day, even went without his dinner, and found that in the evening he had written twenty-three hexameters, versifying a part of what he had before written in prose. From that time, pleased with his efforts, he composed no more in prose. To-day he informed me that he had finished his plan before he read Milton. He was enchanted to see an author who before him had trod the same path. This is a contradiction of what he said before. He did not wish to speak of his poem to any one till it was finished; but some of his friends who had seen what he had finished, tormented him till he had consented to publish a few books in a journal. He was then, I believe, very young, about twenty-five. The rest was printed at different periods, four books at a time. The reception given to the first specimens was highly flattering. He was nearly thirty years in finishing the whole poem, but of these thirty years not more than two were employed in the composition. He only composed in favourable moments; besides, he had other occupations. He values himself upon the plan of his odes, and accuses the modern lyrical writers of gross deficiency in this respect. I laid the same accusation against Horace: he would not hear of it—but waved the discussion. He called Rousseau's Ode to Fortune a moral dissertation in stanzas. I spoke of Dryden's St. Cecilia; but he did not seem familiar with our writers. He wished to know the distinctions between our dramatic and epic blank verse. He recommended me to read his Herman before I read either the Messiah or the odes. He flattered himself that some time or other his dramatic poems would be known in England. He had not heard of Cowper. He thought that Voss, in his translation of the Illiad,

had done violence to the idiom of the Germans, and had sacrificed it to the Greek, not remembering sufficiently that each language has its particular spirit and genius. He said Lessing was the first of their dramatic writers. I complained of Nathan as tedious. He said there was not enough of action in it, but that Lessing was the most chaste of their writers. He spoke favourably of Goethe; but said that his "Sorrows of Werter" was his best work, better than any of his dramas; he preferred the first written to the rest of Goethe's dramas. Schiller's "Robbers" he found so extravagant that he could not read it. I spoke of the scene of the setting sun. He did not know it. He said Schiller could not live. He thought Don Carlos the best of his dramas; but said that the plot was inextricable. It was evident he knew little of Schiller's works; indeed, he said he could not read them. Burgher, he said, was a true poet, and would live; that Schiller, on the contrary, must soon be forgotten; that he gave himself up to the imitation of Shakspeare, who often was extravagant, but that Schiller was ten thousand times more so. He spoke very slightingly of Kotzebue, as an immoral author in the first place, and next, as deficient in power. At Vienna, said he, they are transported with him; but we do not reckon the people of Vienna either the wisest or the wittiest people of Germany. He said Wieland was a charming author, and a sovereign master of his own language; that in this respect Goethe could not be compared to him, or, indeed, could any body else. He said that his fault was to be fertile to exuberance. I told him the Oberon had just been translated into English. He asked me if I was not delighted with the poem. I answered, that I thought the story began to flag about the seventh or eighth book, and observed, that it was unworthy of a man of genius to make the interest of a long poem turn entirely upon animal gratification. He seemed at first disposed to excuse this by saying, that there are different subjects for poetry, and that poets are not willing to be restricted in their choice. I answered, that I thought the *passion* of love as well suited to the purposes of poetry as any other passion; but that it was a cheap way of pleasing, to fix the attention of the reader through a long poem on the mere *appetite*. Well, but, said he, you see that such poems please every body. I answered, that it was the province of a great poet to raise people up to his own level, not to descend to theirs. He agreed, and con-

fessed, that on no account whatsoever would he have written a work like the Oberon. He spoke in raptures of Wieland's style, and pointed out the passage where Retzia is delivered of her child, as exquisitely beautiful. I said that I did not percieve any very striking passages; but that I made allowance for the imperfections of a translation. Of the thefts of Wieland, he said, they were so exquisitely managed, that the greatest writers might be proud to steal as he did. He considered the books and fables of old romance writers in the light of the ancient mythology, as a sort of common property, from which a man was free to take whatever he could make a good use of. An Englishman had presented him with the odes of Collins, which he had read with pleasure. He knew little or nothing of Gray, except his Essay in the churchyard. He complained of the fool in Lear. I observed, that he seemed to give a terrible wildness to the distress; but still he complained. He asked whether it was not allowed, that Pope had written rhyme poetry with more skill than any of our writers. I said I preferred Dryden, because his couplets had greater variety in their movement. He thought my reason a good one; but asked whether the rhyme of Pope were not more exact. This question I understood as applying to the final terminations, and observed to him that I believed it was the case, but that I thought it was easy to excuse some inaccuracy in the final sounds, if the general sweep of the verse was superior. I told him that we were not so exact with regard to the final endings of lines as the French. He did not seem to know that we made no distinction between masculine and feminine (i. e. single or double) rhymes; at least, he put inquiries to me on this subject. He seemed to think that no language could ever be so far formed as that it might not be enriched by idioms borrowed from another tongue. I said this was a very dangerous practice; and added, that I thought Milton had often injured both his prose and verse by taking this liberty too frequently. I recommended to him the prose works of Dryden as models of pure and native English. I was treading upon tender ground, as I have reason to suppose that he has himself liberally indulged in the practice.

The same day I dined at Mr. Klopstock's, where I had the pleasure of a third interview with the poet. We talked principally about indifferent things. I asked him what he thought of Kant. He said

that his reputation was much on the decline in Germany. That for his own part he was not surprised to find it so, as the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible; that he had often been pestered by the Kanteans, but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it, and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do, by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion. He spoke of Wolfe as the first metaphysician they had in Germany. Wolfe had followers, but they could hardly be called a sect; and luckily till the appearance of Kant, about fifteen years ago, Germany had not been pestered by any sect of philosophers whatsoever, but that each man had separately pursued his inquiries uncontrolled by the dogmas of a Master. Kant had appeared ambitious to be the founder of a sect—that he had succeeded, but that the Germans were now coming to their senses again. That Nicolai and Engel had in different ways contributed to disenchant the nation; but, above all, the incomprehensibility of the philosopher and his philosophy. He seemed pleased to hear, that as yet Kant's doctrines had not met with any admirers in England—did not doubt but that we had too much wisdom to be duped by a writer, who set at defiance the common sense and common understandings of men. We talked of tragedy. He seemed to rate highly the power of exciting tears. I said that nothing was more easy than to deluge an audience; that it was done every day by the meanest writers."

I must remind you, my friend, first, that these notes, &c. are not intended as specimens of Klopstock's intellectual power, or even "*colloquial prowess*," to judge of which, by an accidental conversation, and this with strangers, and those too foreigners, would be not only unreasonable, but calumnious. Secondly, I attribute little other interest to the remarks, than what is derived from the celebrity of the person who made them. Lastly, if you ask me whether I have read the Messiah, and what I think of it? I answer, as yet the first four books only; and as to my opinion, (the reasons of which hereafter,) you may guess it, from what I could not help muttering to myself, when the good pastor this morning told me that Klopstock was the German Milton—"a very *German* Milton indeed!!!"—Heaven preserve you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Quid, quod præfatione præmunierim libellum, qua conor omnem offendiculi ansam præcidere? Neque quicquam addubito, quin ea candidis omnibus faciat satis. Quid autem facias istis, qui vel ob ingenii pertinaciam sibi satisfieri nolent, vel stupidiores sint quam ut satisfactionem intelligant? Nam quem ad modum Simonides dixit, Thessalos hebetiores esse quam ut possint a se decipi, ita quosdam videas stupidiores quam ut placari queant. Adhæc, non mirum est, invenire quod calumnietur qui nihil aliud quærit nisi quod calumnietur.

ERASMUS, *ad Dorpium Theologum.*

IN the rifacciamento of THE FRIEND, I have inserted extracts from the Conciones ad Populum, printed, though scarcely published, in the year 1795, in the very heat and height of my antiministerial enthusiasm: these in proof that my principles of *politics* have sustained no change. In the present chapter, I have annexed to my Letters from Germany, with particular reference to that which contains a disquisition on the modern drama, a critique on the Tragedy of Bertram, written within the last twelve months: in proof, that I have been as falsely charged with any fickleness in my principles of *taste*. The letter was written to a friend; and the apparent abruptness with which it begins, is owing to the omission of the introductory sentences.

You remember, my dear Sir, that Mr. Whitbread, shortly before his death, proposed to the assembly subscribers of Drury-Lane Theatre, that the concern should be farmed to some responsible individual, under certain conditions and limitations; and that his proposal was rejected, not without indignation, as subversive of the main object, for the attainment of which, the enlightened and patriotic assemblage of philo-dramatists had been induced to risk their subscriptions. Now, this object was avowed to be no less than the redemption of the British stage, not only from horses, dogs, elephants, and the like zoological rarities, but also from the more pernicious barbarisms and Kotzebuisms in morals and taste. Drury-Lane was to be restored to its former classical renown; Shakspeare, Johnson, and Otway, with the expurgated muses of Vanburgh, Congreve and Wycherly, were to be re-inaugurated in their

rightful dominion over British audiences; and the Herculean process was to commence by exterminating the speaking monsters imported from the banks of the Danube, compared with which their mute relations, the emigrants from Exeter 'Change, and Polito (late Pidcock's) show-carts, were tame and inoffensive. Could an heroic project, at once so refined and so arduous, be consistently entrusted to, could its success be rationally expected from a mercenary manager, at whose critical quarantine the *lucri bonus odor* would conciliate a bill of health to the plague in person? No! As the work proposed, such must be the work masters. Rank, fortune, liberal education, and (their natural accompaniments or consequences) critical discernment, delicate tact, disinterestedness, unsuspected morals, notorious patriotism, and tried Macœnaship, these were the recommendations that influenced the votes of the proprietary subscribers of Drury-Lane Theatre, these the motives that occasioned the election of its Supreme Committee of Management. This circumstance alone would have excited a strong interest in the public mind, respecting the first production of the Tragic Muse which had been announced under such auspices and had passed the ordeal of such judgments; and the Tragedy, on which you have requested my judgment, was the work on which the great expectations, justified by so many causes, were doomed at length to settle.

But before I enter on the examination of *Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand* I shall interpose a few words on the phrase *German Drama*, which I hold to be altogether a misnomer. At the time of Lessing, the German Stage, such as it was, appears to have been a flat and servile copy of the French. It was Lessing who first introduced the name and the works of Shakspeare to the admiration of the Germans; and I should not, perhaps, go too far, if I add, that it was Lessing who first proved to all thinking men, even to Shakspeare's own countrymen, the true nature of his apparent irregularities. These, he demonstrated were deviations only from the *Accidents* of the Greek Tragedy; and from such accidents as hung a heavy weight on the wings of the Greek Poets, and narrowed their flight within the limits of what we may call the *Heroic Opera*. He proved, that in all the essentials of art, no less than in the truth of nature, the plays of Shakspeare were incomparably more coincident with the principles of Aristotle, than the productions of

Corneille and Racine, notwithstanding the boasted regularity of the latter. Under these convictions, were Lessing's own dramatic works composed. Their deficiency is in depth and in imagination; their excellence is in the construction of the plot, the good sense of the sentiments, the sobriety of the morals, and the high polish of the diction and dialogue. In short, his dramas are the very antipodes of all those which it has been the fashion, of late years, at once to abuse and to enjoy under the name of the German Drama. Of this latter, Schiller's *Robbers* was the earliest specimen; the first fruits of his youth, (I had almost said of his boyhood) and, as such, the pledge and promise of no ordinary genius. Only as *such* did the maturer judgment of the author tolerate the play. During his whole life he expressed himself concerning this production, with more than needful asperity, as a monster not less offensive to good taste than to sound morals; and, in his latter years, his indignation at the unwonted popularity of the *Robbers*, seduced him into *contrary* extremes, viz. a studied feebleness of interest, (as far as the interest was to be derived from incidents and the excitement of curiosity;) a diction elaborately metrical; the affectation of rhymes; and the pedantry of the chorus. But to understand the true character of the *Robbers*, and of the countless imitations which were its spawn, I must inform you, or at least, call to your recollection, that about that time, and for some years before it, three of the most popular books in the German language, were, the translations of *Young's Night Thoughts*, *Hervey's Meditations*, and *Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe*. Now, we have only to combine the bloated style and peculiar rhythm of Hervey, which is poetic only on account of its utter unfitness for prose, and might as appropriately be called prosaic, from its utter unfitness for poetry; we have only, I repeat, to combine these Herveyisms with the strained thoughts, the figurative metaphysics and solemn epigrams of Young on the one hand; and with the loaded sensibility, the minute detail, the morbid consciousness of every thought and feeling in the whole flux and reflux of the mind, in short, the self-involution and dreamlike continuity of Richardson on the other hand; and then, to add the horrific incidents, and mysterious villains—(geniuses of supernatural intellect, if you will take the author's words for it, but on a level with the meanest ruffians of the condemned cells, if we are to judge by their actions and contrivances)—to add the ruined castles, the

dungeons, the trap doors, the skeletons, the flesh-and-blood ghosts, and the perpetual moonshine of a modern author, (themselves the literary brood of the *Castle of Otranto*, the translations of which, with the imitations and improvements aforesaid, were about that time beginning to make as much noise in Germany as their originals were making in England)—and as the compound of these ingredients duly mixed, you will recognise the so called *German* Drama. The *Olla Podrida* thus cooked up, was denounced, by the best critics in Germany, as the mere cramps of weakness, and orgasms of a sickly imagination, on the part of the author, and the lowest provocation of torpid feeling on that of the readers. The old blunder, however, concerning the irregularity and wildness of Shakspeare, in which the German did but echo the French, who again were but the echoes of our own critics, was still in vogue, and Shakspeare was quoted as authority for the most anti Shakspearean Drama. We have, indeed, two poets who wrote as one, near the age of Shakspeare, to whom, (as the worst characteristic of their writings) the Coryphæus of the present Drama may challenge the honour of being a poor relation, or impoverished descendant. For if we would charitably consent to forget the comic humour, the wit, the felicities of style, in other words, *all* the poetry, and nine-tenths of all the genius of Beaumont and Fletcher, that which would remain becomes a Kotzebue.

The so-called *German* Drama, therefore, is *English* in its *origin*, *English* in its *materials*, and *English* by re-adoption; and till we can prove that Kotzebue, or any of the whole breed of Kotzebues, whether dramatists or romantic writers, or writers of romantic dramas, were ever admitted to any other shelf in the libraries of well-educated Germans than were occupied by their originals, and apes' apes in their mother country, we should submit to carry our own brat on our own shoulders; or, rather, consider it as a lack-grace returned from transportation with such improvements only in growth and manners as young transported convicts usually come home with.

I know nothing that contributes more to a clear insight into the true nature of any literary phenomenon, than the comparison of it with some elder production, the *likeness* of which is *striking*, yet only *apparent*; while the *difference* is *real*. In the present case this opportunity is furnished us by the old Spanish play, entitled *An-*

theista Fulminato, formerly, and perhaps still, acted in the churches and monasteries of Spain, and which, under various names, (*Don Juan, the Libertine, &c.*) has had its day of favour in every country throughout Europe. A popularity so extensive, and of a work so grotesque and extravagant, claims and merits philosophical attention and investigation. The first point to be noticed is, that the play is throughout *imaginative*. Nothing of it belongs to the real world but the names of the places and persons. The comic parts equally with the tragic; the living, equally with the defunct characters, are creatures of the brain; as little amenable to the rules of ordinary probability as the *Satan* of *Paradise Lost*, or the *Caliban* of the *Tempest*, and, therefore, to be understood and judged of as impersonated *abstractions*. Rank, fortune, wit, talent, acquired knowledge, and liberal accomplishments, with beauty of person, vigorous health, and constitutional hardihood—all these advantages, elevated by the habits and sympathies of noble birth and national character, are supposed to have combined in *Don Juan*, so as to give him the means of carrying into all its *practical* consequences the doctrine of a godless nature as the sole ground and efficient cause not only of all things, events, and appearances, but, likewise, of all our thoughts, sensations, impulses, and actions. Obedience to nature is the only virtue; the gratification of the passions and appetites her only dictate; each individual's self-will the sole organ through which nature utters her commands, and

> "Self-contradiction is the only wrong!
> For, by the laws of spirit, in the right
> Is every individual character
> That acts in strict consistence with itself."

That speculative opinions, however impious and daring they may be, are not always followed by correspondent conduct, is most true, as well as that they can scarcely, in any instance, be *systematically* realized, on account of their unsuitableness to human nature and to the institutions of society. It can be hell, only where it is *all* hell; and a separate world of devils is necessary for the existence of any one complete devil. But, on the other hand, it is no less clear, nor, with the biography of Carrier and his fellow atheists before us, can it be denied, without wilful blindness, that the (so called) *system of nature*, (i. e. materialism, with the utter rejection of moral responsibility, of a present providence and of a both present and future

retribution) may influence the characters and actions of individuals, and even of communities to a degree that almost does away the distinction between men and devils, and will make the page of the future historian, resemble the narration of a madman's dreams. It is not the *wickedness* of *Don Juan*, therefore, which constitutes the character an *abstraction*, and removes it from the rules of probability; but the rapid succession of the correspondent acts and incidents, his intellectual superiority, and the splendid accumulation of his gifts and desirable qualities, as co-existent with *entire* wickedness in one and the same person. But this likewise, is the very circumstance which gives to this strange play its charm and universal interest. *Don Juan* is, from beginning to end, an *intelligible* character, as much so as the *Satan* of Milton. The poet asks only of the reader, what as a poet, he is privileged to ask, viz., that sort of negative faith in the existence of such a being, which we willingly give to productions *professedly ideal*, and a disposition to the same state of feeling as that with which we contemplate the *idealized* figures of the Apollo Belvidere, and the Farnese Hercules. What the Hercules is to the *eye* in *corporeal* strength, *Don Juan* is to the *mind* in strength of *character*. The ideal consists in the happy balance of the generic with the individual. The former makes the character representative and symbolical, therefore instructive; because, *mutatis mutandis*, it is applicable to whole classes of men. The latter gives its *living* interest; for nothing *lives* or is *real*, but as definite and individual. To understand this completely, the reader need only recollect the specific state of his feelings, when in looking at a picture of the historic (more properly of the poetic or heroic) class, he objects to a particular figure as being too much of a *portrait*; and this interruption of his complacency he feels without the least reference to, or the least acquaintance with, any person in real life whom he might recognise in this figure. It is enough that such a figure is not *ideal*; and therefore, not ideal, because one of the two factors or elements of the *ideal* is in excess. A similar and more powerful objection he would feel towards a set of figures which were *mere* abstractions, like those of Cipriani, and what have been called Greek forms and faces, i. e. outlines drawn according to a recipe. *These* again are not *ideal*, because in these the *other* element is in excess. "*Forma formans per formam formatam translucens*," is the definition and perfection of *ideal* art.

This excellence is so happily achieved in the *Don Juan*, that it is capable of interesting without poetry, nay, even without words, as in our pantomime of that name. We see, clearly, how the character is formed; and the very extravagance of the incidents, and the super-human *entireness* of *Don Juan's* agency, prevents the wickedness from shocking our minds to any painful degree. (We do not *believe* it enough for this effect; no, not even with that kind of temporary and negative belief or acquiescence which I have described above.) Meantime the qualities of his character are too desirable, too flattering to our pride and our wishes, not to make up on this side as much additional faith as was lost on the other. There is no danger (thinks the spectator or reader) of *my* becoming such a monster of iniquity as *Don Juan!* *I* never shall be an atheist! *I* shall never disallow all distinction between right and wrong! *I* have not the least inclination to be so outrageous a drawcansir in my love affairs! But to possess such a power of captivating and enchanting the affections of the other sex! to be capable of inspiring in a charming and even a virtuous woman, a love so deep, and so entirely personal to *me!* that even my worst vices, (if I *were* vicious) even my cruelty and perfidy, (if I *were* cruel and perfidious) could not eradicate the passion! To be so loved for my *own self*, that even with a distinct knowledge of my character, she yet died to save me! this, sir, takes hold of two sides of our nature, the better and the worse. For the heroic disinterestedness to which love can transport a woman, cannot be contemplated without an honourable emotion of reverence towards womanhood; and on the other hand, it is among the miseries, and abides in the dark ground-work of our nature, to crave an outward confirmation of that *something* within us, which is our *very self*, that something, not *made up* of our qualities and relations, but itself the supporter and substantial basis of all these. Love *me*, and not my qualities, may be a vicious and an insane wish, but it is not a wish wholly without a meaning.

Without power, virtue would be insufficient and incapable of revealing its being. It would resemble the magic transformation of Tasso's heroine into a tree, in which she could only groan and bleed. (Hence power is necessarily an object of our desire and of our admiration.) But of all power, that of the mind is, on every account, the grand desideratum of human ambition. We shall be as gods

in knowledge, was and must have been the *first* temptation; and the co-existence of great intellectual lordship with guilt has never been adequately represented without exciting the strongest interest, and for this reason, that in this bad and heterogeneous co-ordination we can contemplate the intellect of man more exclusively as a separate self subsistence, than in its proper state of subordination to his own conscience, or to the will of an infinitely superior being.

This is the sacred charm of Shakspeare's male characters in general. They are all cast in the mould of Shakspeare's own gigantic intellect; and this is the open attraction of his *Richard*, *Iago*, *Edmund*, &c. in particular. But again; of all intellectual power, that of superiority to the fear of the invisible world is the most dazzling. Its influence is abundantly proved by the one circumstance, that it can bribe us into a voluntary submission of our better knowledge, into suspension of all our judgment derived from constant experience, and enable us to peruse with the liveliest interest, the wildest tales of ghosts, wizards, genii, and secret talismans. On this propensity, so deeply rooted in our nature, a specific *dramatic* probability may be raised by a true poet, if the whole of his work be in harmony; a *dramatic* probability, sufficient for dramatic pleasure, even when the component characters and incidents border on impossibility. The poet does not require us to be awake and believe; he solicits us only to yield ourselves to a dream; and this too with our eyes open, and with our judgment *perdue* behind the curtain ready to awake us at the first motion of our will; and meantime, only not to *dis*believe. And in such a state of mind, who but must be impressed with the cool intrepidity of *Don John* on the appearance of his father's ghost:

"GHOST.—Monster! behold these wounds!"
"D. JOHN.—I do! They were well meant, and well performed, I see."
"GHOST.————Repent, repent of all thy villanies.
My clamorous blood to heaven for vengeance cries,
Heaven will pour out his judgments on you all.
Hell gapes for you, for you each fiend doth call,
And hourly waits your unrepenting fall.
You with eternal horrors they'll torment,
Except of all your crimes you suddenly repent."

(Ghost sinks.)

"D. JOHN.—Farewell, thou art a foolish ghost. Repent quoth he! what could this mean? Our senses are all in a mist, sure."
"D. ANTONIO.—(one of D. Juan's reprobate companions.) They are not! 'Twas a ghost."

"D. Lopez.—(another reprobate.) I ne'er believed those foolish tales before."

"D. John.—Come! 'Tis no matter. Let it be what it will, it must be natural."

"D. Ant.—And nature is unalterable in us too."

"D. John.—'Tis true! The nature of a ghost cannot change ours."

Who also can deny a portion of sublimity to the tremendous consistency with which he stands out the last fearful trial, like a second Prometheus?

"Chorus of Devils."

"Statue-Ghost.—Will you not relent and feel remorse?"

"D. John.—Couldst thou bestow another heart on me, I might. But with this heart I have, I cannot."

"D. Lopez.—These things are prodigious."

"D. Anton.—I have a sort of grudging to relent, but something holds me back."

"D. Lop.—If we could, 'tis now too late. I will not."

"D. Ant.—We defy thee!"

"Ghost.—Perish ye impious wretches, go and find the punishments laid up in store for you!"

(Thunder and lightning. D. Lop. and D. Ant. are swallowed up.)

"Ghost to D. John.—Behold their dreadful fates and know that thy last moment's come!"

"D. John.—Think not to fright me, foolish ghost; I'll break your marble body in pieces, and pull down your horse."

(Thunder and lightning—chorus of devils, &c.

"D. John.—These things I see with wonder but no fear.
Were all the elements to be confounded,
And shuffled all into their former chaos;
Were seas of sulphur flaming round about me,
And all mankind roaring within those fires,
I could not fear, or feel the least remorse.
To the last instant I would dare thy power.
Here I stand firm, and all thy threats condemn.
Thy murderer (*to the ghost of one whom he had murdered*)
Stands here! Now do thy worst!"

(*He is swallowed up in a cloud of fire.*)

In fine, the character of *Don John* consists in the union of every thing desirable to human nature as *means*, and which therefore, by the well-known law of association become at length desirable on their own account, and in their own dignity they are here displayed, as being employed to *ends* so *un*human, that in the effect they appear almost as *means* without an *end*. The ingredients too are mixed in the happiest proportion, so as to uphold and relieve each other—more especially in that constant interpoise of wit, gayety,

and social generosity, which prevents the criminal, even in his most atrocious moments, from sinking into the mere ruffian, as far at least, as our *imagination* sits in judgment. Above all, the fine suffusion through the whole, with the characteristic manners and feelings of a highly bred gentleman gives life to the drama. Thus having invited the *statue ghost* of the governor whom he had murdered, to supper, which invitation the marble ghost accepted by a nod of the head, *Don John* has prepared a banquet.

"D. JOHN.—Some wine, sirrah! Here's to Don Pedro's ghost—he should have been welcome."

"D. LOP.—The rascal is afraid of you after death."

(*One knocks hard at the door.*)

"D. JOHN.—(to the servant)—Rise and do your duty."

"SERV.—Oh the devil, the devil!" (marble ghost enters.)

"D. JOHN.—Ha! 'tis the ghost! Let's rise and receive him! Come Governor you are welcome, sit there; if we had thought you would have come, we would have staid for you.

* * * * * * * * *

Here Governor, your health! Friends put it about! Here's excellent meat, taste of this ragout. Come I'll help you, come eat, and let old quarrels be forgotten."

(*The ghost threatens him with vengeance.*)

"D. JOHN.—We are too much confirmed—curse on this dry discourse. Come here's to your mistress; you had one when you were living: not forgetting your sweet sister."

(*Devils enter.*)

D. JOHN.—Are these some of your retinue? Devils say you? I'm sorry I have no burnt brandy to treat 'em with; that's drink fit for devils." &c.

Nor is the scene from which we quote interesting in *dramatic* probability alone; it is susceptible likewise of a sound moral; of a moral that has more than common claims on the notice of a too numerous class, who are ready to receive the qualities of gentlemanly courage, and scrupulous honour (in all the recognized laws of honour) as the *substitutes* of virtue, instead of its *ornaments*. This, indeed, is the moral value of the play at large, and that which places it at a world's distance from the spirit of modern jacobinism. The latter introduces to us clumsy copies of these showy instrumental qualities, in order to *reconcile* us to vice and want of principle; while the *Atheista Fulminato* presents an exquisite portraiture of the same qualities, in all their gloss and glow; but presents them for the sole purpose of displaying their hollowness, and in order to put us on our guard by demonstrating their utter indifference to

vice and virtue, whenever these and the like accomplishments are contemplated for themselves alone.

Eighteen years ago I observed, that the whole secret of the modern jacobinical drama, (which, and not the German is its appropriate designation) and of all its popularity, consists in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things in their causes and effects: namely, in the excitement of surprise by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour (those things rather which pass amongst us for such) in persons and in classes where experience teaches us least to expect them; and by rewarding with all the sympathies which are the due of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem.

This of itself would lead me back to *Bertram* or the *Castle of St. Aldobrand;* but, in my own mind, this tragedy was brought into connexion with the *Libertine*, (Shadwell's adaptation of the *Atheista Fulminato* to the English stage in the reign of Charles the Second) by the fact, that our modern drama is taken, in the substance of it, from the first scene of the third act of the *Libertine*. But with what palpable superiority of judgment in the original! Earth and hell, men and spirits, are up in arms against *Don John:* the two former acts of the Play have not only prepared us for the supernatural, but accustomed us to the prodigious. It is, therefore, neither more nor less than we anticipate, when the *captain* exclaims, "In all the dangers I have been, such horrors I never knew. I am quite unmanned;" and when the *hermit* says, "that he had beheld the ocean in wildest rage, yet ne'er before saw a storm so dreadful, such horrid flashes of lightning, and such claps of thunder, were never in my remembrance." And *Don John's* burst of startling impiety is equally intelligible in its motive, as dramatic in its effect.

But what is there to account for the prodigy of the tempest at *Bertram's* shipwreck? It is a mere supernatural effect without even a hint of any supernatural agency; a prodigy without any circumstance mentioned that is prodigious; and a miracle introduced without a ground, and ending without a result. Every event and every scene of the play might have taken place as well if *Bertram* and his vessel had been driven in by a common hard gale, or from want of provisions. The first act would have indeed lost its great-

est and most *sonorous* picture: a scene for the sake of a scene, without a word spoken; as *such*, therefore, (a rarity without a precedent) we must take it, and be thankful! In the opinion of not a few, it was, in every sense of the word, the best scene in the play. I am quite certain it was the most *innocent*: and the steady, quiet uprightness of the flame of the wax-candles which the monks held over the roaring billows amid the storm of wind and rain, was *really* miraculous.

The Sicilian sea coast: a convent of monks: night: a most portentous, unearthly storm: a vessel is wrecked: contrary to all human expectation, one man saves himself by his prodigious powers as a swimmer, aided by the peculiarity of his destination—

> PRIOR.——"All, all did perish—
> 1ST MONK.—Change, change those drenched weeds—
> PRIOR.—I wist not of them—every soul did perish—
> *Enter 3d Monk, hastily.*
> 3D MONK.—No, there was one did battle with the storm
> With careless desperate force; full many times
> His life was won and lost, as tho' he recked not—
> No hand did aid him, and he aided none—
> Alone he breasted the broad wave, alone
> That man was saved."

Well! This man is led in by the monks, supposed dripping wet, and to very natural inquiries, he either remains silent, or gives most brief and surly answers, and after three or four of these half-line courtesies, "*dashing off the monks*" who had saved him, he exclaims in the true sublimity of our modern misanthropic heroism—

> "Off! ye are men—there's poison in your touch.
> But I must yield, for this (*what?*) hath left me strengthless."

So end the three first scenes. In the next, (the Castle of St. Aldobrand) we find the servants there equally frightened with this unearthly storm, though wherein it differed from other violent storms we are not told, except that Hugo informs us, page 9—

> PIET.—"Hugo, well met. Does e'en thy age bear
> Memory of so terrible a storm?
> HUGO.—They have been frequent lately.
> PIET.—They are ever so in Sicily.
> HUGO.—So it is said. But storms when I was young
> Would still pass o'er like Nature's fitful fevers,
> And rendered all more wholesome. Now their rage
> Sent thus unseasonable and profitless
> Speaks like threats of heaven."

A most perplexing theory of Sicilian storms is this of old Hugo! and what is very remarkable, not apparently founded on any great familiarity of his own with this troublesome article. For when Pietro asserts the "*ever more frequency*" of tempests in Sicily, the old man professes to know nothing more of the fact, but by hearsay. "So it is said."—But why he assumed this storm to be unseasonable, and on what he grounded his prophecy, (for the storm is still in full fury) that it would be profitless, and without the physical powers common to all other violent sea-winds in purifying the atmosphere, we are left in the dark; as well concerning the particular points in which he knew it (during its continuance) to differ from those that he had been acquainted with in his youth. We are at length introduced to the Lady Imogine, who, we learn, had not rested "*through*" the night, not on account of the tempest, for

> "Long 'ere the storm arose, her restless gestures
> Forbade all hope to see her blest with sleep."

Sitting at a table, and looking at a portrait, she informs us—First, that portrait painters may make a portrait from memory—

> "The limner's art may trace the absent feature."

For surely these words could never mean, that a painter may have a person sit to him, who afterwards may leave the room or perhaps the country? Second, that a portrait-painter can enable a mourning lady to possess a good likeness of her absent lover, but that the portrait painter cannot, and who shall—

> "Restore the *scenes* in which they met and parted?"

The natural answer would have been—Why the scene-painter to be sure! But this unreasonable lady requires, in addition, sundry things to be painted that have neither lines nor colours—

> "The thoughts, the recollections sweet and bitter
> Or the Elysian dreams of lovers when they loved."

Which last sentence must be supposed to mean: *when they were present and* making love to each other.—Then, if this portrait could speak, it would "acquit the faith of womankind." How? Had she remained constant? No, she has been married to another man, whose wife she now is. How then? Why, that in spite of her

marriage vow, she had continued to yearn and crave for her former lover—

> "This has her body, that her mind;
> Which has the better bargain?"

The lover, however, was not contented with this precious arrangement, as we shall soon find. The lady proceeds to inform us, that during the many years of their separation, there have happened in the different parts of the world, a number of "*such things*;" even such as in a course of years always have, and, till the millennium, doubtless always will happen somewhere or other. Yet this passage, both in language and in metre, is, perhaps, among the best parts of the Play. The lady's loved companion and most esteemed attendant, Clotilda, now enters and explains this love and esteem by proving herself a most passive and dispassionate listener, as well as a brief and lucky querist, who asks by *chance*, questions that we should have thought made for the very sake of the answers. In short, she very much reminds us of those puppet-heroines, for whom the showman contrives to dialogue, without any skill in ventriloquism. This, notwithstanding, is the best scene in the Play, and though crowded with solecisms, corrupt diction, and offences against metre, would possess merits sufficient to outweigh them, if we could suspend the moral sense during the perusal. It tells well and passionately the preliminary circumstances, and thus overcomes the main difficulty of most first acts, viz. that of retrospective narration. It tells us of her having been honourably addressed by a noble youth, of rank and fortune vastly superior to her own: of their mutual love, heightened on her part by gratitude; of his loss of his sovereign's favour; his disgrace, attainder and flight; that he (thus degraded) sunk into a vile ruffian, the chieftain of a murderous banditti; and that from the habitual indulgence of the most reprobate habits and ferocious passions, he had become so changed even in his appearance and features,

> "That she who bore him had recoiled from him,
> Nor known the alien visage of her child;
> Yet still *she* [Imogine] lov'd him."

She is compelled by the silent entreaties of a father, perishing with "bitter shameful want on the cold earth," to give her hand, with a heart thus irrevocably pre-engaged, to Lord Aldobrand, the

enemy of her lover, even to the very man who had baffled his ambitious schemes, and was, at the present time, entrusted with the execution of the sentence of death which had been passed on Bertram. Now, the proof of "woman's love," so industriously held forth for the sympathy, if not the esteem of the audience, consists in this: that though Bertram had become a robber and a murderer by trade, a ruffian in manners, yea, with form and features at which his *own mother* could not but "recoil," yet she, (Lady Imogine,) "the wife of a most noble, honoured Lord," estimable as a man, exemplary and affectionate as a husband, and the fond father of her only child—that she, notwithstanding all this, striking her heart, dares to say it—

"But thou art Bertram's still, and Bertram's ever."

A monk now enters, and entreats in his Prior's name for the wonted hospitality, and "free *noble usage*," of the Castle of St. Aldobrand, for some wretched ship-wrecked souls; and from this we learn, for the first time, to our infinite surprise, that notwithstanding the supernaturalness of the storm aforesaid, not only Bertram, but the whole of his gang, had been saved, by what means we are left to conjecture, and can only conclude that they had all the same desperate swimming powers, and the same saving destiny as the hero, Bertram himself. So ends the first act, and with it the tale of the events, both those of which the Tragedy begins, and those which had occurred previous to the date of its commencement. The second displays Bertram in disturbed sleep, which the Prior, who hangs over him, prefers calling a "starting trance," and with a strained voice, that would have awakened one of the seven sleepers, observes to the audience—

"How the lip works! How the bare teeth *do* grind!
And beaded drops course down his writhen brow!" *

The dramatic effect of which passage we not only concede to the admirers of this Tragedy, but acknowledge the further advantage

*——————"The big round tears
Coursed one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase,"

says Shakspeare of a wounded stag, hanging his head over a stream: naturally, from the position of the head, and most beautifully, from the association of the preceding image, of the chase, in which "the poor sequester'd stag from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt." In the supposed position of Bertram, the metaphor, if not false, loses all the propriety of the original.

of preparing the audience for the most surprising series of wry faces, profiated mouths, and lunatic gestures, that were ever "*launched*" on an audience to "*sear the sense.*" *

PRIOR.—"I will awake him from this *horrid trance;*
This is no natural sleep! Ho! *wake thee,* stranger."

This is rather a whimsical application of the verb reflex, we must confess, though we remember a similar transfer of the agent to the patient in a manuscript Tragedy, in which the Bertram of the piece, prostrating a man with a single blow of his fist, exclaims—"Knock me thee down, then ask thee if thou liv'st." Well, the stranger obeys; and whatever his sleep might have been, his waking was perfectly natural, for lethargy itself could not withstand the scolding stentorship of Mr. Holland, the Prior. We next learn from the best authority, his own confession, that the misanthropic hero, whose destiny was incompatible with drowning, is Count Bertram, who not only reveals his past fortunes, but avows with open atrocity, his satanic hatred of Imogine's Lord, and his frantic thirst of revenge; and so the raving character raves, and the scolding character scolds—and what else? Does not the Prior *act?* Does he not send for a posse of constables or thief-takers, to handcuff the villain, and take him either to Bedlam or Newgate? Nothing of the kind; the author preserves the unity of character, and the scolding Prior from first to last does nothing but scold, with the exception, indeed, of the last scene of the last act, in which, with a most surprising revolution, he whines, weeps, and kneels to the condemned blaspheming assassin out of pure affection to the high-hearted man, the sublimity of whose angel-sin rivals the star-bright apostate, (i. e. who was as proud as Lucifer, and as wicked as the Devil,) and "had thrilled him" (Prior Holland aforesaid) with wild admiration.

* Among a number of other instances of words chosen without reason, Imogine, in the first act, declares that thunder-storms were not able to intercept her prayers for "the desperate man, in desperate *ways* who *dealt*"—

"Yea, when the launched bolt did sear her sense,
Her soul's deep orisons were breathed for him;"

i. e. when a red-hot bolt, launched at her from a thunder-cloud, had cauterized her sense—in plain English, burnt her eyes out of her head, she kept still praying on.

"Was not *this* love? Yea, thus doth woman love!

Accordingly, in the very next scene, we have this tragic Macheath, with his whole gang, in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, without any attempt on the Prior's part either to prevent him, or to put the mistress and servants of the Castle on their guard against their new inmates, though he (the Prior) knew, and confesses that he knew, that Bertram's "fearful mates" were assassins so habituated and naturalized to guilt, that—

> "When their *drenched hold* forsook both gold and gear,
> They griped their daggers with a murderer's instinct;"

and though he also knew that Bertram was the leader of a band whose trade was blood. To the Castle, however, he goes, thus with the holy Prior's consent, if not with his assistance; and thither let us follow him.

No sooner is our hero safely housed in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, than he attracts the notice of the lady and her confidante, by his "wild and terrible dark eyes," "muffled form," "fearful form," * "darkly wild," "proudly stern," and the like common place indefinites, seasoned by merely verbal antitheses, and, at best, copied, with very slight change, from the CONRADE of Southey's Joan of Arc. The lady Imogine, who has been (as is the case, she tells us, with all soft and solemn spirits) *worshipping* the moon on a terrace or rampart within view of the castle, insists on having an interview with our hero, and this, too, tete-a-tete. Would the reader learn why and wherefore the confidante is excluded, who very properly remonstrates against such "conference, alone, at night, with one who bears such fearful form"—the reason follows—"why, *therefore* send him!" I say *follows*, because the next line, "all things of fear have lost their power over me," is separated from the former by a break or pause, and beside that it is a very poor answer to the danger—is no answer at all to the gross indelicacy of this wilful exposure. We must, therefore, regard it as a

* This sort of repetition is one of this writer's peculiarities, and there is scarce a page which does not furnish one or more instances—Ex. gr. in the first page or two. Act I. line 7th, "and *deemed* that I might sleep."—Line 10, "Did rock and *quiver* in the bickering *glare*."—Lines 14, 15, 16, "But by the momently *gleams* of sheeted blue, Did the pale marbles *glare* so *sternly* on me, I almost *deemed* they lived."—Line 37, "The *glare* of Hell."—Line 35, "O holy Prior, this is no *earthly storm*"—Line 38, "This is no *earthly storm*."—Line 42, "*Dealing* with us."—Line 43, "*Deal* thus sternly."—Line 44, "Speak! thou hast *something seen!*"—A *fearful sight!*"—Line 45, "What hast thou *seen?* A piteous, *fearful sight.*"—Line 48, "*quivering gleams.*"—Line 50, "In the hollow *pauses of the storm.*"—Line 61, "The *pauses of the storm*," &c.

mere afterthought, that a little softens the rudeness, but adds nothing to the weight of that exquisite woman's reason aforesaid. And so exit Clotilda, and enter Bertram, who "stands without looking at her," that is, with his lower limbs forked, his arms akimbo, his side to the lady's front, the whole figure resembling an inverted Y. He is soon, however, roused from the state surly to the state frantic, and then follow raving, yelling, cursing, she fainting, he relenting, in run's Imogine's child, squeaks "mother!" He snatches it up, and with a "God bless thee, child! Bertram has kissed thy child,"—the curtain drops. The third act is short, and short be our account of it. It introduces Lord St. Aldobrand on his road homeward, and next Imogine in the convent, confessing the foulness of her heart to the Prior, who first indulges his old humour with a fit of senseless scolding, then leaves her alone with her ruffian paramour, with whom she makes at once an infamous appointment, and the curtain drops, that it may be carried into act and consummation.

I want words to describe the mingled horror and disgust with which I witnessed the opening of the fourth act, considering it as a melancholy proof of the depravation of the public mind. The shocking spirit of jacobinism seemed no longer confined to politics. The familiarity with atrocious events and characters appeared to have poisoned the taste, even where it had not directly disorganized the moral principles, and left the feelings callous to all the mild appeals, and craving alone for the grossest and most outrageous stimulants. The very fact then present to our senses, that a British audience could remain passive under such an insult to common decency, nay, receive with a thunder of applause, a human being supposed to have come reeking from the consummation of this complex foulness and baseness, these and the like reflections so pressed as with the weight of lead upon my heart, that actor, author, and tragedy would have been forgotten, had it not been for a plain elderly man sitting beside me, who, with a very serious face, that at once expressed surprise and aversion, touched my elbow, and pointing to the actor, said to me in a half-whisper—"Do you see that little fellow there? he has just been committing adultery!" Somewhat relieved by the laugh which this droll address occasioned, I forced back my attention to the stage sufficiently to learn, that Bertram is recovered from a transient fit of re-

morse, by the information that St. Aldobrand was commissioned (to do what every honest man must have done without commission, if he did his duty) to seize him and deliver him to the just vengeance of the law; an information which (as he had long known himself to be an attainted traitor and proclaimed outlaw, and not only a trader in blood himself, but notoriously the *Captain* of a gang of thieves, pirates and assassins) assuredly could not have been new to him. It is this, however, which alone and instantly restores him to his accustomed state of raving, blasphemy, and nonsense. Next follows Imogine's constrained interview with her injured husband, and his sudden departure again, all in love and kindness, in order to attend the feast of St. Anselm at the convent. This was, it must be owned, a very strange engagement for so tender a husband to make within a few minutes after so long an absence. But first his lady has told him that she has "a vow on her," and wishes "that black perdition may gulph her perjured soul,"—(Note: she is lying at the very time)—if she ascends his bed till her penance is accomplished. How, therefore, is the poor husband to amuse himself in this interval of her penance? But do not be distressed, reader, on account of the St. Aldobrand's absence! As the author has contrived to send him out of the house, when a husband would be in his, and the lover's way, so he will doubtless not be at a loss to bring him back again as soon as he is wanted. Well! the husband gone in on the one side, out pops the lover from the other, and for the fiendish purpose of harrowing up the soul of his wretched accomplice in guilt, by announcing to her with most brutal and blasphemous execrations, his fixed and deliberate resolve to assassinate her husband; all this, too, is for no discoverable purpose, on the part of the author, but that of introducing a series of super-tragic starts, pauses, screams, struggling, dagger-throwing, falling on the ground, starting up again wildly, swearing, outcries for help, falling again on the ground, rising again, faintly tottering towards the door, and, to end the scene, a most convenient fainting fit of our lady's, just in time to give Bertram an opportunity of seeking the object of his hatred, before she alarms the house, which indeed she has had full time to have done before, but that the author rather chose she should amuse herself and the audience by the above-described ravings and startings. She recovers slowly, and to her enter Clotilda, the confidante and mother con-

fessor; then commences what in theatrical language is called the madness, but which the author more accurately entitles delirium, it appearing indeed a sort of intermittent fever, with fits of light-headedness off and on, whenever occasion and stage effect happen to call for it. A convenient return of the storm (we told the reader before-hand how it would be) had changed

> "The rivulet that bathed the Convent walls,
> Into a foaming flood; upon its brink
> The Lord and his small train *do* stand appalled.
> With torch and bell from their high battlements
> The monks *do* summon to the pass in vain;
> He must return to-night."—

Talk of the devil, and his horns appear, says the proverb: and sure enough, within ten lines of the exit of the messenger sent to stop him, the arrival of Lord St. Aldobrand is announced. Bertram's ruffian band now enter, and range themselves across the stage, giving fresh cause for Imogine's screams and madness. St. Aldobrand having received his mortal wound behind the scenes, totters in to welter in his blood, and to die at the feet of this double-damned adultress.

Of her, as far as she is concerned in this 4th act, we have two additional points to notice: first, the low cunning and Jesuitical trick with which she deludes her husband into *words* of forgiveness, which he himself does not understand; and secondly, that everywhere she is made the object of interest and sympathy, and it is not the author's fault, if at any moment she excites feelings less gentle than those we are accustomed to associate with the self-accusations of a sincere, religious penitent. And did a British audience endure all this? They received it with plaudits, which, but for the rivalry of the carts and hackney coaches, might have disturbed the evening prayers of the scanty week day congregation at St. Paul's cathedral.

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

Of the fifth act, the only thing noticeable (for rant and nonsense, though abundant as ever, have long before the last act, become things of course) is the profane representation of the high altar in a chapel, with all the vessels and other preparations for the holy sacrament. A hymn is actually sung on the stage by the choires-

ter boys! For the rest, Imogine, who now and then *talks* deliriously, but who is always light-headed, as far as her *gown* and *hair* can make her so, wanders about in dark woods, with cavern-rocks and precipices in the back scene; and a number of mute dramatis personæ move in and out continually, for whose presence there is always at least this reason, that they afford something to be *seen*, by that very large part of a Drury-lane audience, who have small chance of *hearing* a word. She had, it appears, taken her child with her; but what becomes of the child, whether she murdered it or not, nobody can tell, nobody can learn; it was a riddle at the *representation*, and, after a most attentive *perusal* of the play, a riddle it remains.

> "No more I know, I wish I did,
> And I would tell it all to you;
> For what became of this poor child
> There's none that ever knew."
>
> WORDSWORTH'S THORN.

Our whole information* is derived from the following words—

> "PRIOR.—Where is thy child?
> CLOTIL.—[Pointing to the cavern into which she had looked] Oh, he lies cold within his cavern tomb!
> Why dost thou urge her with the horrid theme?
> PRIOR.—[Who will not, the reader may observe, be disappointed of his dose of scolding,]
> It was to make [quere wake] one living cord o' th' heart,
> And I will try, tho' my own breaks at it.
> Where is thy child?
> IMOG.—[With a frantic laugh]
> The forest-fiend had snatched him—
> He [who? the fiend or the child?] rides the night-mare through the wizzard woods."

Now, these two lines consist in a senseless plagiarism from the counterfeited madness of Edgar in Lear, who, in imitation of the gipsy incantations, puns on the old word Mair, a Hag; and the no less senseless adoption of Dryden's forest-fiend, and the wizzard stream by which Milton, in his Lysidas, so finely characterizes the spreading Deva, fabulosus Amnis. Observe, too, these images stand unique in the speeches of Imogine, without the slightest re-

* The child is an important personage, for I see not by what possible means the author could have ended the second and third acts, but for its timely appearance. How ungrateful, then, not further to notice its fate!

semblance to any thing she says before or after. But we are weary. The characters in this act frisk about, here, there, and every where, as teazingly as the Jack-o'lanthorn lights which mischievous boys, from across a narrow street, throw with a looking-glass on the faces of their opposite neighbours. Bertram disarmed, outheroding Charles de Moor in the Robbers, befaces the collected knights of St. Anselm, (all in complete armour,) and so, by pure dint of black looks, he out-dares them into passive poltrons. The sudden revolution in the Prior's manners we have before noticed, and it is indeed so outre, that a number of the audience imagined a great secret was to come out, viz. that the Prior was one of the many instances of a youthful sinner metamorphosed into an old scold, and that this Bertram would appear at last to be his son. Imogine re-appears at the convent, and dies of her own accord. Bertram stabs himself, and dies by her side; and that the play may conclude as it began, viz. in a superfetation of blasphemy upon nonsense, because he had snatched a sword from a despicable coward, who retreats in terror when it is pointed towards him in sport; this *felo de se*, and thief-captain, this loathsome and leprous confluence of robbery, adultery, murder, and cowardly assassination, this monster, whose best deed is, the having saved his betters from the degradation of hanging him, by turning Jack Ketch to himself, first recommends the charitable Monks and holy Prior to pray for his soul, and then has the folly and impudence to exclaim,

"I died no felon's death,
A warrior's weapon freed a warrior's soul!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

It sometimes happens that we are punished for our faults by incidents, in the causation of which these faults had no share; and this I have always felt the severest punishment. The wound, indeed, is of the same dimensions; but the edges are jagged, and there is a dull under-pain that survives the smart which it had aggravated. For there is always a consolatory feeling that accompanies the sense of a proportion between antecedents and consequents. The sense of before and after becomes both intelligible and intellectual when, and *only* when, we contemplate the succession in the relations of cause and effect, which like the two poles in the magnet, manifest the being and unity of the one power by relative opposites, and give, as it were, a substratum of permanence, of identity, and, therefore, of reality to the shadowy flux of time. It is eternity, revealing itself in the phenomena of time; and the perception and acknowledgment of the proportionality and appropriateness of the present to the past, prove to the afflicted soul, that it has not yet been deprived of the sight of God; that it can still recognise the effective presence of a Father, though through a darkened glass and a turbid atmosphere, though of a Father that is chastising it. And for this cause, doubtless, are we so framed in mind, and even so organized in brain and nerve, that all confusion is painful. It is within the experience of many medical practitioners, that a patient, with strange and unusual symptoms of disease, has been more distressed in mind, more wretched from the fact of being unintelligible to himself and others, than from the pain or danger of the disease; nay, that the patient has received the most solid comfort, and resumed a genial and enduring cheerfulness, from some new symptom or product, that had at once determined the name and nature of his complaint, and rendered it an intelligible effect of an intelligible cause; even though the discovery did at the same moment preclude all hope of restoration. Hence the mystic theologians, whose delusions we may more confidently hope to separate from their actual intuitions, when we condescend to read their works without the

presumption that whatever our fancy, (always the ape, and too often the adulterator and counterfeit of our memory) has not made or cannot make a picture of, must be nonsense; hence, I say, the Mystics have joined in representing the state of the reprobate spirits as a dreadful dream in which there is no sense of reality, not even of the pangs they are enduring—an eternity without time, and, as it were, below it—God present, without manifestation of his presence. But these are depths which we dare not linger over. Let us turn to an instance more on a level with the ordinary sympathies of mankind. Here, then, and in this same healing influence of *light* and distinct beholding, we may detect the final cause of that instinct which, in the great majority of instances, leads and almost compels the afflicted to communicate their sorrows. Hence, too, flows the alleviation that results from "*opening out* our griefs;" which are thus presented in distinguishable forms instead of the mist through which whatever is shapeless becomes magnified and (literally) *enormous*. Casimir, in the fifth ode of his third book, has happily expressed this thought.*

Me longus silendi
Edit amor; faciliaque Luctus
Hausit medullas. Fugerit ocius,
Simul negantem visere jusseris
Aures amicorum, et loquacem
Questibus evacuaris iram.

Olim querendo desinimus queri,
Ipsoque fletu lacryma perditur,
Nec fortis æque, si per omnes
Cura volet residetque ramos.

Vires amicis perdit in auribus
Minorque semper dividitur dolor
Per multa permissus vagari
Pectora.—

ID. LIB. III. OD. 5.

* *Classically*, too, as far as consists with the allegorizing fancy of the *modern*, that still *striving to project* the inward, contra-distinguishes itself from the seeming ease with which the poetry of the ancients *reflects* the world without. Casimir affords, perhaps, the most striking instance of this characteristic difference; for his *style* and *diction* are really classical, while Cowley, who resembles Casimir in many respects, completely barbarizes *his* Latinity, and even his metre, by the heterogeneous nature of his thoughts. That Dr. Johnson should have passed a contrary judgment, and have even preferred Cowley's Latin poems to Milton's, is a caprice that has, if I mistake not, excited the surprise of all scholars. I was much amused last summer with the laughable *affright* with which an Italian poet perused a page of Cowley's Davideis, contrasted with the enthusiasm with which he first ran through, and then read aloud, Milton's Mansus and Ad Patrem.

I shall not make this an excuse, however, for troubling my readers with any complaints or explanations, with which, as readers, they have little or no concern. It may suffice, (for the present at least) to declare that the causes that have delayed the publication of these volumes for so long a period after they had been printed off, were not connected with any neglect of my own; and that they would form an instructive comment on the chapter concerning authorship as a trade, addressed to young men of genius in the first volume of this work. I remember the ludicrous effect which the first sentence of an auto-biography, which, happily for the writer, was as meagre in incidents as it is well possible for the life of an individual to be—"The *eventful* life which I am about to record, from the hour in which I rose into exist on this planet," &c. Yet when, notwithstanding this warning example of self importance before me, I review my own life, I cannot refrain from applying the same epithet to it, and with more than ordinary emphasis—and no private feeling, that affected myself only, should prevent me from *publishing* the same, (for *write* it I assuredly shall, should life and leisure be granted me) if continued reflection should strengthen my present belief, that my history would add its contingent to the enforcement of one important truth, viz. that we must not only love our neighbours as ourselves, but ourselves likewise as our neighbours; and that we can do neither, unless we love God above both.

> Who lives that's not
> Depraved or depraves? Who dies, *that bears*
> *Not one spurn to the grave—of their friends' gift?*

Strange as the delusion may appear, yet it is most true, that three years ago I did not know or believe that I had an enemy in the world; and now, even my strongest sensations of gratitude are mingled with fear, and I reproach myself for being too often disposed to ask—Have I one friend?—During the many years which intervened between the composition and the publication of the Christable, it became almost as well known among literary men, as if it had been on common sale; the same references were made to it, and the same liberties taken with it, even to the very names of the imaginary persons in the poem. From almost all of our most celebrated Poets, and from some with whom I had no personal acquaintance, I either received or heard of expressions of admiration

that (I can truly say) appeared to myself utterly disproportionate to a work that pretended to be nothing more than a common Faery Tale. Many, who had allowed no merit to my other poems, whether printed or manuscript, and who have frankly told me as much, uniformly made an exception in favour of the CHRISTABEL and the Poem entitled LOVE. Year after year, and in societies of the most different kinds, I had been entreated to recite it; and the result was still the same in all, and altogether different in this respect from the effect produced by the occasional recitation of any other poems I had composed.—This before the publication. And since then, with very few exceptions, I have heard nothing but abuse, and this too in a spirit of bitterness at least as disproportionate to the pretensions of the poem, had it been the most pitiably below mediocrity, as the previous eulogies, and far more inexplicable. In the Edinburgh Review, it was assailed with a malignity and a spirit of personal hatred that ought to have injured only the work in which such a tirade was suffered to appear; and this review was generally attributed (whether rightly or no I know not) to a man who, both in my presence and in my absence, has frequently pronounced it the finest poem of its kind in the language. This may serve as a warning to authors, that in their calculations on the probable reception of a poem, they must subtract to a large amount from the panegyric; which may have encouraged them to publish it, however unsuspicious and however various the sources of this panegyric may have been. And, first, allowances must be made for private enmity, of the very existence of which they had perhaps entertained no suspicion—for personal enmity behind the mask of anonymous criticism: secondly, for the necessity of a certain proportion of abuse and ridicule in a Review, in order to make it saleable; in consequence of which, if they have no friends behind the scenes, the chance must needs be against them; but lastly, and chiefly, for the excitement and temporary sympathy of feeling, which the recitation of the poem by an admirer, especially if he be at once a warm admirer and a man of acknowledged celebrity, calls forth in the audience. For this is really a species of Animal Magnetism, in which the enkindling Reciter by perpetual comment of looks and tones, lends his own will and apprehensive faculty to his Auditors. They *live* for the time within the dilated sphere of his intellectual Being. It is equally possible, though not equally common, that a reader

left to himself should sink below the poem, as that the poem left to itself should flag beneath the feelings of the reader.—But in my own instance, I had the additional misfortune of having been gossipped about, as devoted to metaphysics, and worse than all, to a system incomparably nearer to the visionary flights of Plato, and even to the jargon of the mystics, than to the established tenets of Locke. Whatever, therefore, appeared with my name, was condemned before hand, as predestined metaphysics. In a dramatic poem, which had been submitted by me to a gentleman of great influence in the Theatrical world, occurred the following passage :—

> O we are querulous creatures! Little less
> Than all things can suffice to make us happy:
> And little more than nothing is enough
> To make us wretched.

Aye, here now! (exclaimed the Critic) here come Coleridge's *Metaphysics!* And the very same motive (that is, not that the lines were unfit for the present state of our immense Theatres, but that they were *Metaphysics**) was assigned elsewhere for the rejection of the two following passages. The first is spoken in answer to a usurper, who had rested his plea on the circumstance, that he had been chosen by the acclamations of the people :—

> What people? How convened? Or if conven'd,
> Must not that magic power that charms together
> Millions of men in council, needs have power
> To win or wield them? Rather, O far rather,
> Shout forth thy titles to yon circling mountains,
> And with a thousandfold reverberation
> Make the rocks flatter thee, and the volleying air,
> Unbribed, shout back to thee, King Emerich!
> By wholesome laws to embank the Sovereign Power;
> To deepen by restraint; and by prevention
> Of lawless will to amass and guide the flood
> In its majestic channel, is man's task
> And the true patriot's glory! In all else
> Men safelier trust to Heaven, than to themselves
> When least themselves: even in those whirling crowds
> Where folly is contagious, and too oft
> Even wise men leave their better sense at home
> To chide and wonder at them when return'd.

* Poor unlucky Metaphysics! and what are they? A single sentence expresses the object and thereby the contents of this science. Γνῶδι σεαυτον. et Deum quantum licet et in Deo omnia scibis. Know thyself: and so shalt thou know God, as far as is permitted to a creature, and in God all things.—Surely, there is a strange—nay, rather a too natural, aversion in many to know themselves.

The second passage is in the mouth of an old and experienced Courtier, betrayed by the man in whom he had most trusted.

> And yet Sarolta, simple, inexperienced,
> Could see him as he was and oft has warned me.
> Whence learnt she this? O she was innocent.
> And to be innocent is Nature's wisdom.
> The fledge dove knows the prowlers of the air,
> Fear'd soon as seen, and flutters back to shelter!
> And the young steed recoils upon his haunches,
> The never-yet-seen adder's hiss first heard!
> Ah! surer than suspicion's hundred eyes
> Is that fine sense, which to the pure in heart
> By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness
> Reveals the approach of evil!

As, therefore, my character as a writer could not easily be more injured by an overt-act than it was already in consequence of the report, I published a work, a large portion of which was professedly metaphysical. A long delay occurred between its first announciation and its appearance; it was reviewed therefore, by anticipation, with a malignity, so avowedly and exclusively personal, as is, I believe, unprecedented even in the present contempt of all common humanity that disgraces and endangers the liberty of the press. After its appearance, the author of this lampoon was chosen to review it in the Edinburgh Review; and under the single condition, that he should have written what he himself really thought, and have criticised the work as he would have done had its author been indifferent to him, I should have chosen that man myself both from the vigour and the originality of his mind, and from his particular acuteness in speculative reasoning, before all others. I remembered Catullus's lines,

> Desine de quoquam quicquam bene velle mereri,
> Aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium.
> Omnia sunt ingrata: nihil fecisse benigne est:
> Imo, etiam tædet, tædet obestque magis.
> Ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbus urget
> Quam, modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit.

But I can truly say, that the grief with which I read this rhapsody of premeditated insult, had the Rhapsodist himself for its whole and sole object: and that the indignant contempt which it excited in me was as exclusively confined to his employer and suborner. I refer to this Review at present, in consequence of information

having been given me, that the innuendo of my "potential infidelity," grounded on one passage of my first Lay Sermon, has been received and propagated with a degree of *credence*, of which I can safely acquit the originator of the calumny. I give the sentences as they stand in the sermon, premising only, that I was speaking exclusively of miracles worked for the outward senses of men. "It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. REASON AND RELIGION ARE THEIR OWN EVIDENCE. The natural sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapors of the night season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception.

"Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances co-exist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings, render miracles superfluous: and if we neglect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God, and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion."

In the sermon and the notes, both the historical truth and the necessity of the miracles are strongly and frequently asserted. "The testimony of books of history, (i. e. relatively to the signs and wonders with which Christ came) is one of the strong and stately *pillars* of the church; but it is not the *foundation!*" Instead, therefore, of defending myself, which I could easily effect by a series of passages, expressing the same opinion, from the Fathers, and the most eminent Protestant Divines from the Reformation to the Revolution, I shall merely state here, what my belief is, concerning the true evidences of Christianity. 1. Its consistency with right Reason, I consider as the outer Court of the Temple, the common area, within which it stands. 2. The miracles, with and through which the Religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the Temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling, in the soul of each believer of its exceeding *desirableness*—the experience that he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretokening, that the Redemption and the Graces propounded to

us in Christ, are *what* he needs;—this I hold to be the true FOUNDATION of the spiritual Edifice. With the strong *a priori* probability that flows in from 1 and 3 on the correspondent historical evidence of 2, no man can refuse or neglect to make the experiment without guilt. But 4, it is the experience derived from a practical conformity to the conditions of the Gospel—it is the opening Eye; the dawning Light; the terrors and the promises of spiritual Growth; the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of Sin hated as Sin, and of the incapability of attaining to either without Christ; it is the sorrow that still rises up from beneath, and the consolation that meets it from above; the bosom treacheries of the Principal in the warfare, and the exceeding faithfulness and long suffering of the uninterested Ally;—in a word, it is the actual *Trial* of the Faith in Christ, with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched ROOF, and Faith itself is the completing KEY-STONE. In order to an efficient belief in Christianity, a man must have been a Christian, and this is the seeming argumentum in circulo, incident to all spiritual Truths, to every subject not presentable under the forms of Time and Space, as long as we attempt to master by the reflex acts of the Understanding, what we can only *know* by the act of *becoming*. "Do the will of my father, and ye shall KNOW whether I am of God." These four evidences I believe to have been, and still to be, for the world, for the whole Church, all necessary, all equally necessary; but that at present, and for the majority of Christians born in Christian countries, I believe the third and the fourth evidences to be the most operative, not as superseding, but as involving a glad undoubting faith in the two former. Credidi, indeoque intellexi, appears to me the dictate equally of Philosophy and Religion, even as I believe Redemption to be the antecedent of Sanctification, and not its consequent. All spiritual predicates may be construed indifferently as modes of Action, or as states of Being. Thus Holiness and Blessedness are the same idea, now seen in relation to act, and now to existence. The ready belief which has been yielded to the slander of my "potential infidelity," I attribute in part to the openness with which I have avowed my doubts, whether the heavy interdict, under which the name of BENEDICT SPINOZA lies, is merited on the whole, or to the whole extent. Be this as it may, I wish, however, that I could find in the books of philosophy, theoretical or

moral, which are alone recommended to the present students of Theology in our established schools, a few passages as thoroughly *Pauline*, as completely accordant with the doctrines of the established Church, as the following sentences in the concluding page of Spinoza's Ethics. Deinde quo mens amore divino seu beatitudine magis gaudet, eo plus *intelligit*, eo majorem in affectus habet potentiam, et eo minus ab affectibus, qui mali sunt, patitur: atque adeo ex eo, quod mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine gaudet, potestatem habet libidines coercendi, nemo beatitudine gaudet quia affectus coercuit; sed contra potestas libidines coercendi ex ipsa beatitudine oritur.

With regard to the Unitarians, it has been shamelessly asserted, that I have denied them to be Christians. God forbid! For how should I know what the piety of the heart may be, or what quantum of error in the understanding may consist with a saving faith in the intentions and actual dispositions of the whole moral being in any one individual? Never will God reject a soul that sincerely loves him, be his speculative opinions what they may; and whether in any given instance certain opinions, be they unbelief or misbelief, are compatible with a sincere love of God, God only can know. But this I have said, and shall continue to say; that if the doctrines, the sum of which I *believe* to constitute the truth in Christ, *be* Christianity, then Unitarian*ism* is not, and vice versa: and that in speaking theologically and *impersonally*, i. e. of PHILANTHROPISM and THEANTHROPISM as schemes of belief, without reference to individuals who profess either the one or the other, it will be absurd to use a different language as long as it is the dictate of common sense, that two opposites cannot properly be called by the same name. I should feel no offence if an Unitarian applied the same to me, any more than if he were to say, that 2 and 2 being 4, 4 and 4 must be 8.

Αλλα βροτων
Τον μεν χενοφρονες αυχαι
Εξ αγαθων εβαλον.
Τον δ' αυ καταμεμφθεντ' αγαν
Ισχυν οικειων καρτερφαλεν καλων
Χειρος ελκων οπισσω, Θυμος ατολμος.

This has been my object, and this alone can be my defence—and O! that with this my personal as well as my LITERARY LIFE

might conclude! the unquenched desire I mean, not without the consciousness of having earnestly endeavored to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptations of Scorners, by showing that the Scheme of Christianity, as taught in the Liturgy and Homilies of our Church, though not discoverable by human Reason, is yet in accordance with it; that link follows link by necessary consequence; that Religion passes out of the ken of reason only where the eye of reason has reached its own horizon; and that faith is then but its continuation: even as the day softens away into the sweet twilight, and twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the darkness. It is night, sacred night! the upraised eye views only the starry heaven which manifests itself alone; and the outward beholding is fixed on the sparks twinkling in the awful depth, though suns of other worlds, only to preserve the soul steady and collected in its pure *act* of inward adoration to the great I AM, and to the filial WORD that re-affirmeth it from eternity to eternity, whose choral echo is the universe.

ΘΕΩ ΜΟΝΩ ΔΟΞΑ.

ERRATA.

Page 144, read the Greek passages in the note, as follows:

τί ἂν συιεῖναι; ὅτι τὸ γενόμενον ἐϛι θεαμα ἐμὸν, σιωπηις (*mallem*, θέαμα ἐμῷ σιωπωϛῆς,) καὶ φύσει γενόμενον θεώρημα, καὶ μοι γενομένη ἐκ θεωρίας τῆς ὠδὶ τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν φιλοθεάμονα ὑπαρχει (*mallem*, κἀι μοι 'η γενομένη ἐκ θεωριας ἀυτῆς ὠδίς.)

Ωδὶς 'ιρα, Ἀῤῥητα Γονη.

Page 147, read the lines from Synesius as follows:

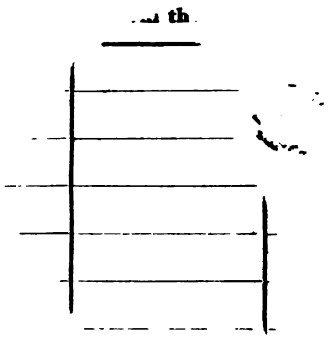
'Εν καὶ Πάντα—taken by itself) is *Spinozism*.

'Εν δ' 'Απάντων—a mere *anima Mundi*.

'Εν τε πρό παντων—is mechanical Theism.

A few other typographical errors occur which the reader will be able to correct.

Owing to the imperfection of our fount of Greek type, and the difficulty of supplying the deficiency at the time it was wanted, we have ventured to use the *final* ϛ in all the Greek passages, instead of the proper *Sigma*.



THE NEW YORK PUBLI
REFERENCE DEPART

This book is under no circumstan
taken from the Building

DEC 3 0 1